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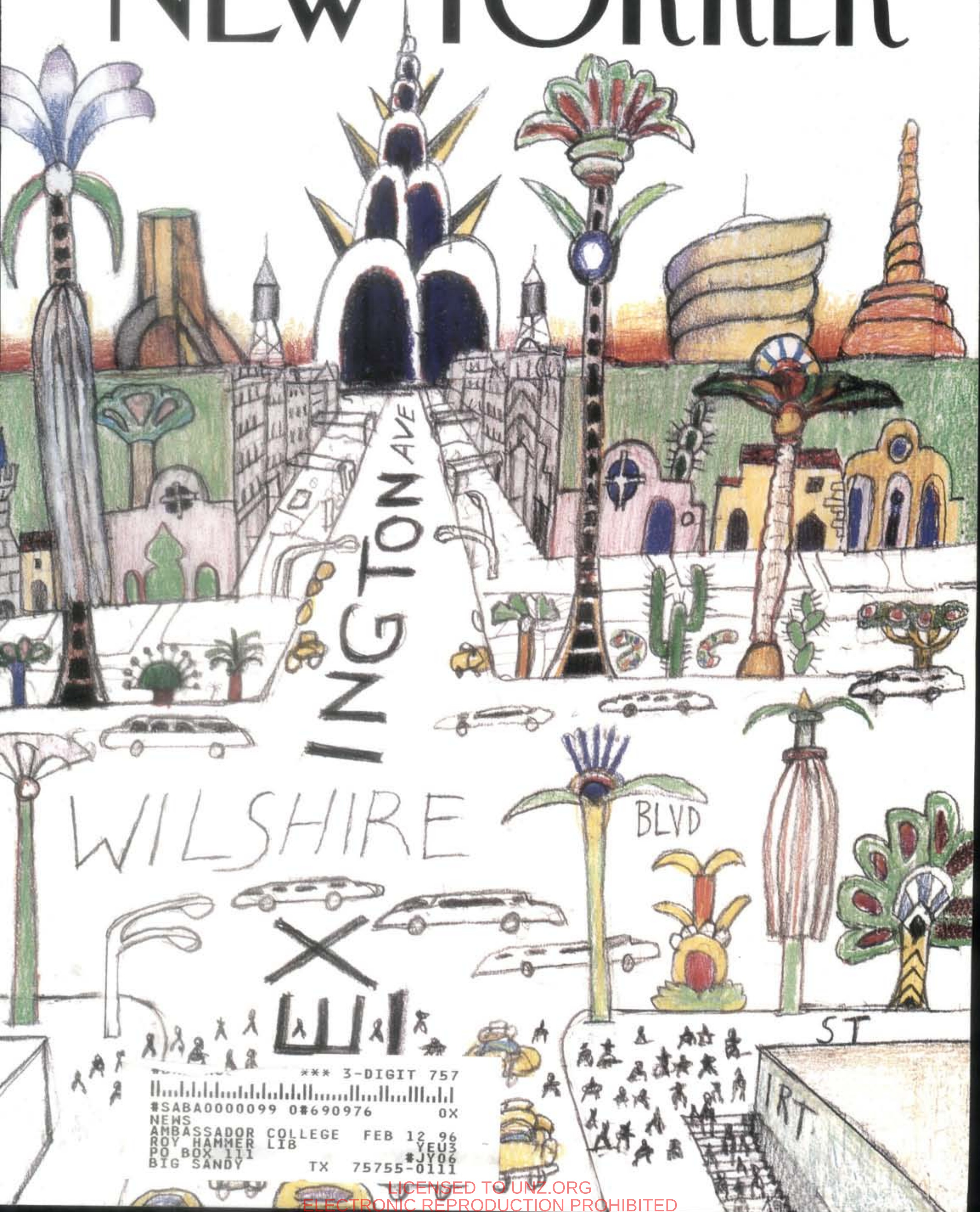
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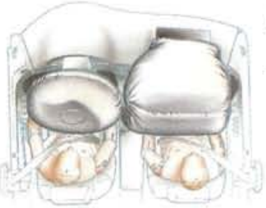

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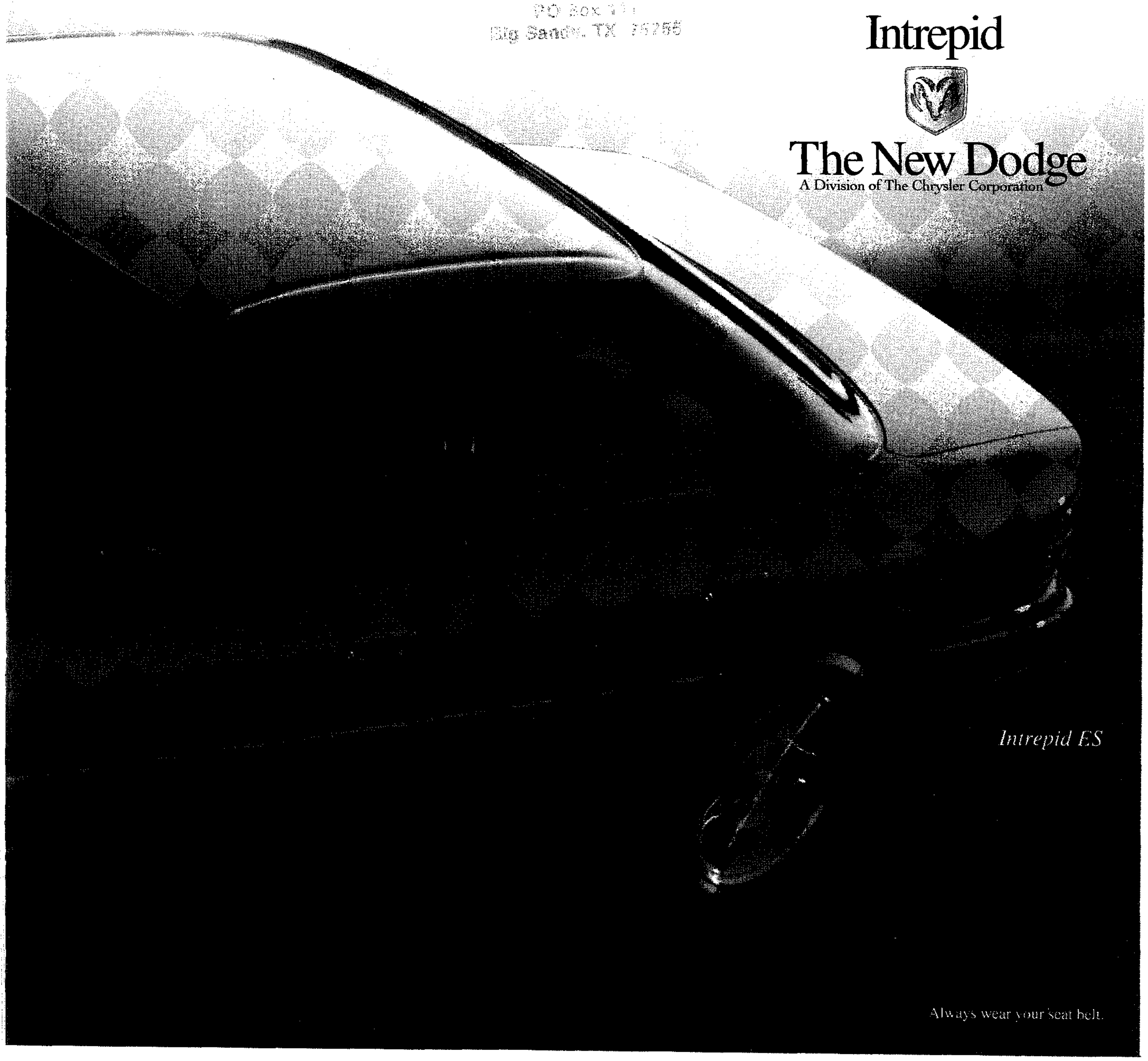

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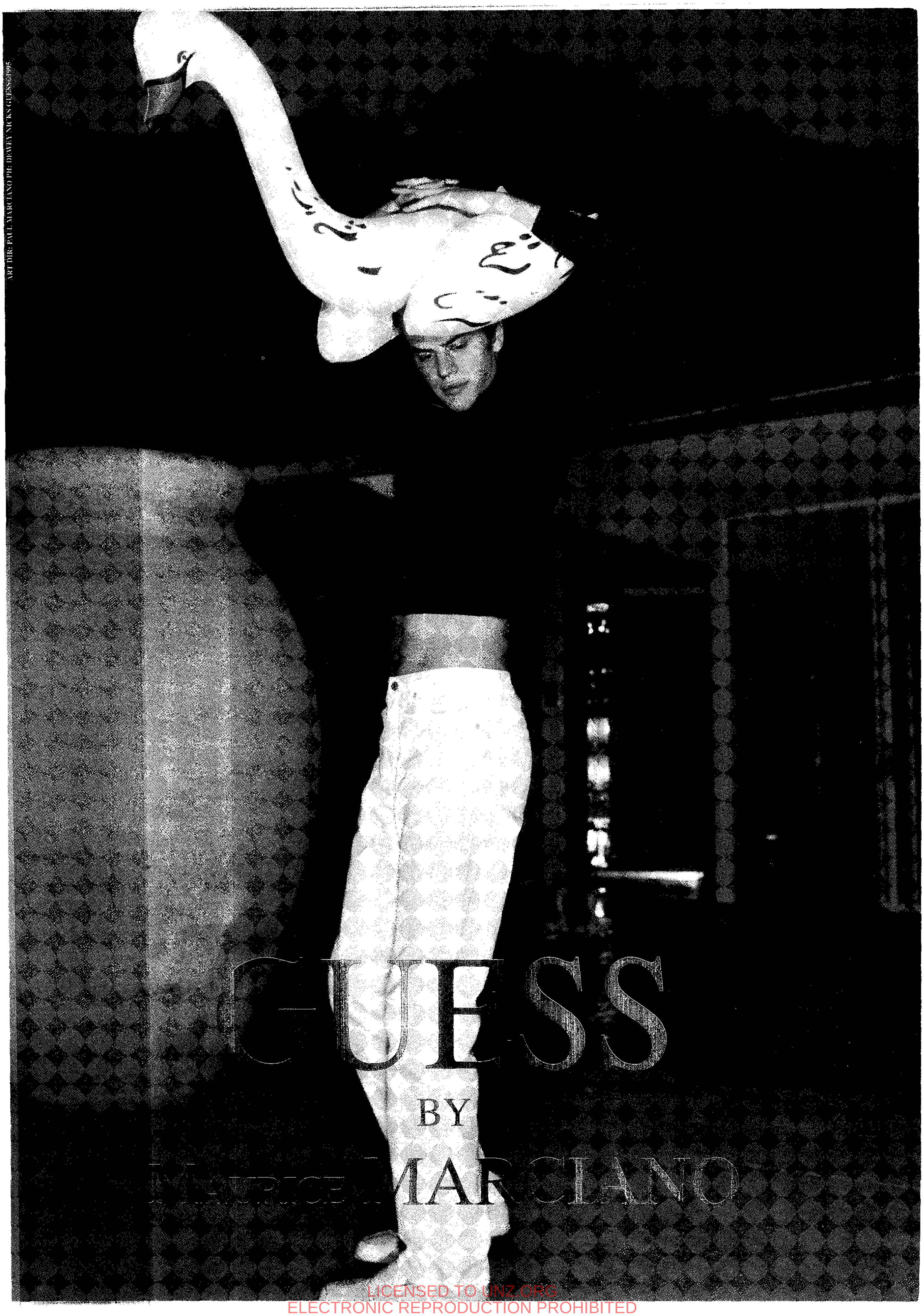
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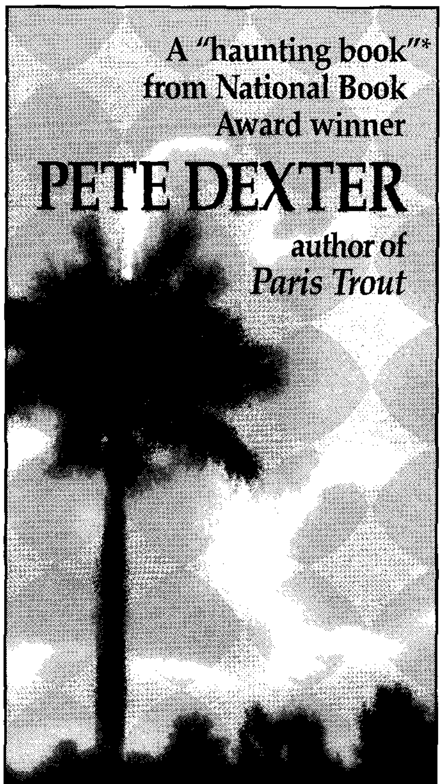

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FEBRUARY 13, 1995

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COVER *Wilshire & Lex, by Saul Steinberg*

DRAWINGS *Bruce Eric Kaplan, Michael Crawford, Leo Cullum, Danny Shanahan, P. C. Vey, Robert Mankoff, Richard Cline, Bruce McCall, Bernard Schoenbaum, J. B. Handelsman, Warren Miller, Roz Chast, Bill Woodman, Henry Martin, Edward Frascino, Bob Knox, Charles Barsotti, Robert Weber*

THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly (except for four combined issues: the last week of December and the first week of January, the last two weeks of February, the last week of June and the first week of July, and the last two weeks of August) by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 20 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036. Vol. LXX, No. 49, February 13, 1995. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. Canadian Publication Mail Sales Product Agreement No.190969. Canadian goods-and-services-tax registration number R123242885. Registered as a newspaper at the British Post Office. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $36.00; two years, $60.00. In Canada, one year, $77.00 (includes G.S.T.). Other foreign, one year, $85.00, payable in advance.

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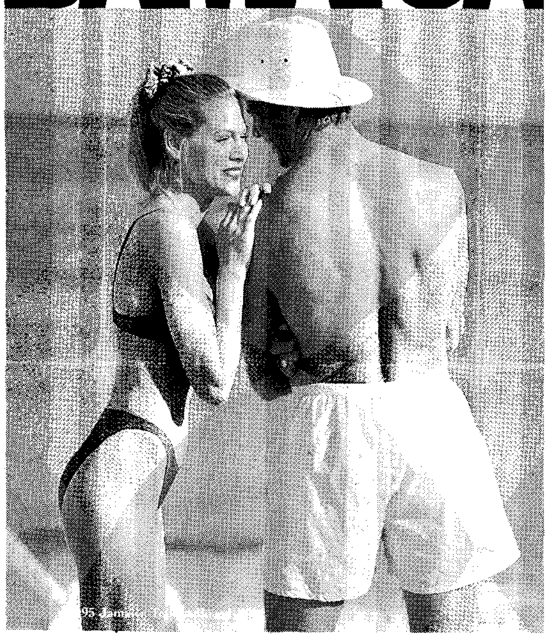

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COMMENT

MARXISM: THE SEQUEL

There's something oddly familiar about Mr. Gingrich's ideology.

HARRY GOLDEN, the late humorist and editor of the *Carolina Israelite*, once wrote, at a time when it seemed plausible that Barry Goldwater might someday make it to the White House, "I always knew the first Jewish President would be an Episcopalian." Something analogous seems to be going on with respect to the first sixties-style radical to occupy a position of genuine power in Washington. This long-awaited phenom turns out to be a Republican, and a right-wing one at that: yes, Newt Gingrich, the Speaker of the House.

Washington's other big-shot baby boomer, Bill Clinton, is often described as a product of the sixties. This is true as far as it goes—the saxophone, the bluejeans, the hugs—but the President is not now, nor has he ever been, a radical, politically or temperamentally. As a student, he was relentlessly mainstream, a straight-arrow, student-council, go-to-class, hit-the-books type, and he still is. Mr. Gingrich, in contrast, seems to have been rather more at home in (to use a term that is still a favorite of his) the counterculture: in 1968, while young Clinton was at Oxford, agonizing about his draft status, young Gingrich, safely deferred, was leading his fellow Tulane students in a raucous protest against the university administration's censorship of supposedly dirty pictures in a campus literary magazine. It is only as a mature adult, though, that Mr. Gingrich has wholeheartedly embraced what he is proud to call a radical agenda.

Goodness. There hasn't been so much loose talk in Washington about "revolution" since Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin hit town to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee. A Nexis database search for articles containing the words "revolution" and "Gingrich" immediately yields a warning that there are more than a thousand. Only when you specify articles published during the last week of January, say, do you get a manageable number; that week, it was two hundred and twenty-six. "This is a real revolution," Mr. Gingrich said in a typical recent talk, this one before the Republican National Committee. And, a few minutes later, "I am a genuine revolutionary; they [the

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Democrats] are the genuine reactionaries." On this occasion, the word "conservative" did not pass the Speaker's lips. It seldom does.

The resemblance between Mr. Gingrich's outlook and that of the campus revolutionaries of the sixties goes beyond a shared relish for the vocabulary of extremism. As Michael Kelly recently noted in these pages ("Letter from Washington," January 23rd), the Speaker has long been an enthusiast of Alvin and Heidi Toffler, the futurists. Last year, he wrote the introduction to the Tofflers' latest book, "Creating a New Civilization: The Politics of the Third Wave," which consists of chapters from the Tofflers' previous books plus some new material, and his think tank, the Progress and Freedom Foundation, underwrote and published the book. Mr. Gingrich has been talking up Tofflerian ideas nonstop for a decade. "I want to urge you to set up a series of study groups to look at the Toffler revolution of a third-wave information revolution," he burbled to the American Hospital Association just last week.

It has been too little remarked that there is an eerie similarity between Tofflerism and Marxism. Look at the correspondences. Marxism—at least in its vulgar form—sees civilization as proceeding in three stages, each of which corresponds to one of the Tofflers'. In the Marxist analysis, feudalism (the equivalent of the Tofflers' agrarian First Wave) gives way to capitalism (the equivalent of the Tofflers' industrial Second Wave), and capitalism, in turn, gives way to communism (the equivalent of the Tofflers' cybernetic Third Wave). Each stage, in its time, constitutes a tremendous advance in human progress; each eventually becomes obsolete (the "contradictions," as the Marxists say, begin to get out of hand); and the next emerges, with much pain and dislocation, from the collapsing ruin of its predecessor. The first sentence of "Creating a New Civilization"—

> A new civilization is emerging in our lives, and blind men everywhere are trying to suppress it.

—echoes the drumroll that opens "The Communist Manifesto":

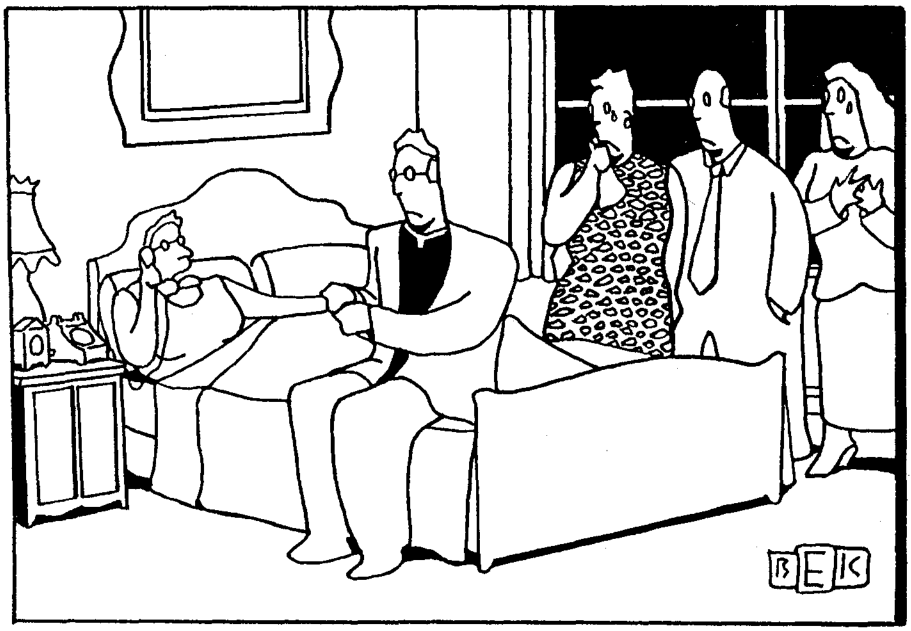
> A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of Communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre.

In both the Marxian and the Tofflerian view, history is relentless, progressive, and ultimately irresistible. Marxism's ultimate vision, like Tofflerism's, is a vaguely defined future paradise of decentralization. How do we know we've reached the third stage, the inevitable culmination of human history? Simple: we see the withering away of the state—the federal government, anyhow.

Tofflerism and Gingrichism, like Marxism and Leninism, aren't identical in every respect; for example, the Tofflers favor employer mandates for health insurance and child care, and official recognition of nontraditional families. But the tone of what can fairly be called Tofflerism-Gingrichism is uncannily like that of Marxism-Leninism. There's a similar arrogance, a similar exhilaration that comes from being among the select few to whom the mysteries and the meaning of history are vouchsafed. There's a similar patronizing contempt for those who don't "get it" and are therefore fated to be swept into the dustbin of history. There's a similar worship of technology. There's a similar cult of toughness. (There's even a similar scorn for "liberalism.") Tofflerism, as surely as Marxism, is a variation on historical materialism. The fervor, the know-it-all certainty, the scientism, the "revolutionary" rapture—much of the new faith is weirdly familiar to anyone who has studied the history of the far left.

This doesn't mean that everything about the new faith is wrong, of course. Marxism produced Soviet totalitarianism, but it also produced stolid, sensible West European social democracy; and the Marxlike doctrines of Gingrich's Tofflerism might likewise produce something useful for the American future. What's attractive about Mr. Gingrich is his insistence that everything is on the table, that Washington can shed its habitual sense of diminished possibility, its cynical hopelessness about changing anything beyond the usual margins. But there is already reason to be on guard against a darker alternative. The apocalyptic three-stage theory of history, the belief in inevitable progress toward ever higher forms of society, the conviction that we, the revolutionaries, know what is best for the masses because we know the laws of history—this is a set of ideas that is not exactly inhospitable to hubris. In the orthodox Marxist version, it led to Stalinism; in a hippie-student version, it led to the excesses that everyone remembers as the worst of the radicalism of the sixties. And there is no obvious reason that those same ideas about history and inevitability and the greater wisdom of those who "get it" should not lead to something unpleasant today—even if, today, the certitudes about three stages and historical inevitability and all the rest can be found on the right and not the left.

—HENDRIK HERTZBERG



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Jane Levere, THE BOSTON GLOBE
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URBAN RENEWAL

Michael Massing, in his article "Ghetto Blasting" (A Critic at Large, January 16th), leaves little room for discussion of individual responsibility. While it is true that society can be overwhelmingly discouraging, there is no hint in the article that we are anything but immoral creatures who can be uplifted only by economic incentives provided by the state. He asks, "Why do some learn the value of personal responsibility while so many others do not?" It is a compelling question, but his claim that some inner-city youths *do* learn the value of responsibility suggests that the burden, and the decision, lie with the individual, and not with the society.

JOHN WILLIAMS
San Antonio, Texas

Mr. Massing's article threw new light on the moment in the movie "Hoop Dreams" when one student's mother, having graduated first in her class, receives her diploma in nursing. She is overcome with happiness, and as I watched this small triumph I wept with her. In the ensuing months, this achievement has come to symbolize for me the true victory in the story. Mr. Massing's perceptive critique made me see that the film—however moving and wonderful it is—remains a part of the problem of the inner cities, since it is, first and foremost, a sports fable. It only reinforces that tired admonition about winning being the only thing. Not true! And certainly not a code to teach youths in the ghetto, where "winners" hold smoking guns and "losers" end up dead on the streets. Until we begin to recognize victories of the soul, we will make no progress whatever in bringing economic justice to the poorest of our poor.

SILVIA TENNENBAUM
East Hampton, N.Y.

A DREAM DEFERRED

Regardless of who builds what across the street from the King Center in Atlanta, Martin Luther King, Jr., will always be the central hero in my life. The "apostle of nonviolence . . . cloaked in martyrdom . . . suffering unto death for his people" is how Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Comment, January 16th), cynically interprets his "winning image," as if it had been made from thin air. The fact is that Dr. King left us a great legacy by offering up his life as a blueprint for peace. He taught us about the transforming spirit of unconditional love, and about the redemptive power of suffering.

MICHAEL D. MCGUIRE
San Francisco, Calif.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Sadly, the Great Communicator has probably done his last communicating, as his biographer Edmund Morris suggests in "This Living Hand" (January 16th). In his November 5th valedictory, Ronald Reagan touched us all with his grace in the face of adversity. Whether or not we bought into his policies, few would dispute that Mr. Reagan is an essentially decent human being. Not surprisingly, this is revealed in his handwriting: as a graphologist, I see in the reproduction of his farewell letter a man who is emotionally responsive and open-minded, with no evidence of self-deception or guile, and who is loyal, strong-willed, and decisive. His words tell us what he wants us to believe; his pen strokes tell us who he is. They match!

SAMUEL H. PHIFER
Lexington, Ky.

In discussing Ronald Reagan's handwritten letter to Americans regarding his Alzheimer's disease, Mr. Morris omits mention of the letter's political power. That letter was released on Saturday, November 5th, in time for the Sunday papers, and just days before the November 8th elections. Most likely, many people voted Republican only after being movingly reminded of President Reagan. Was the letter a calculated political gesture?

THOMAS F. HIRSCH
Brooklyn, N.Y.

DRESS CODE

What is truly shocking about John Berendt's piece on Neil Cargile ("High-Heel Neil," January 16th) is not Mr. Cargile's fondness for dressing in women's clothing but Mr. Berendt's inablity to deal with such behavior. His embarrassed account of being seen with Mr. Cargile at Tavern on the Green doesn't even seem humorous, just uptight and small-minded, as does his unwillingness to accept Mr. Cargile's assertion that he dresses in drag for "fun." Mr. Berendt might have come up with a more illuminating piece if he had examined his own inhibited reaction to Mr. Cargile.

CHRISTOPHER MAHONEY
Brooklyn, N.Y.

DEPT. OF CLARIFICATION

In "Annals of Law: Blaming Faye?" (February 6th), Jeffrey Toobin reported that while Faye Resnick and her publisher, Dove, had said they contributed ten thousand dollars of profits from her book to the Nicole Brown Simpson Foundation with instructions that the money be used to benefit the Simpson children, a foundation spokeswoman had stated, "No money has ever been received by the Brown family from Faye Resnick or any of her agents or publishers for Nicole's children."

Though this statement is literally true, the passage, owing to an editorial error, left an incorrect impression. In fact, Ms. Resnick and Dove did make the donation they said they did, and the foundation acknowledged in writing that it had accepted the money—though it maintained that it will use the funds to support prevention of family violence.

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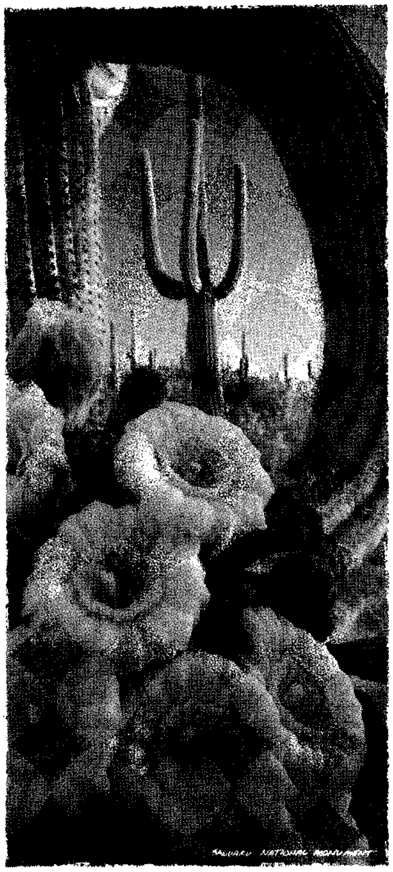

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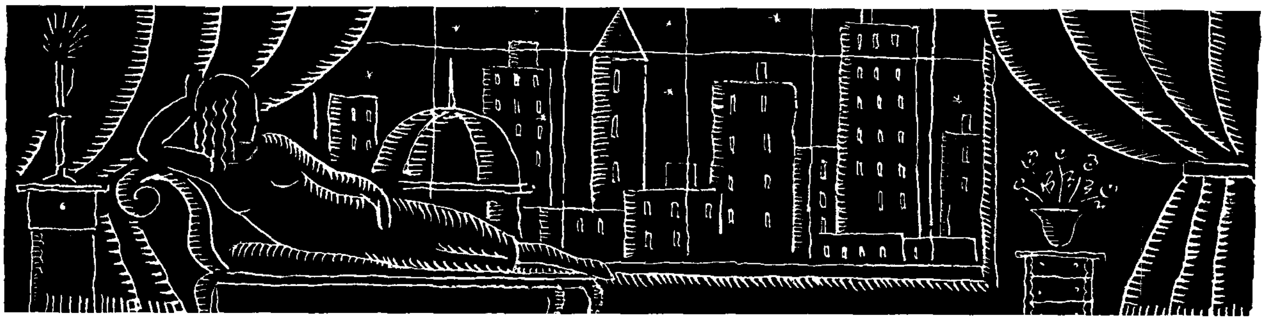

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THE THEATRE

Women on the Edge

When Ellen McLaughlin wasn't flying over Broadway last year, in her role as the one with wings in "Angels in America," she was at home, putting the finishing touches on her own "Iphigenia and Other Daughters." Over the past decade, she and her plays have appeared on some of the country's most prominent stages, including the Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Berkeley Rep, and the Public Theatre in New York. Her role in "Angels" goes back to the initial 1990 workshop at the Mark Taper Forum, in Los Angeles. Now she's working on an original play for the Taper, a drama inspired by Amelia Earhart. ("I've spent a lot of time as a woman and a flier.")

"Iphigenia," which opens this week at the Classic Stage Company, is an adaptation and composite of three Greek tragedies—Euripides' two "Iphigenia"'s and Sophocles' "Electra"—written in contemporary language for a streamlined cast. The heroines of those dramas stood on the periphery of the Trojan War, geographically and otherwise. "Most women feel, deep down, that they are not part of the real history of mankind, the heroic stuff that matters," McLaughlin explains, and it's from this marginal status that she has drawn her theme. The set and costume design, which avoid reference to any specific period, and the text, with its occasional anachronisms, link the daughters of Clytemnestra to women who have lived through modern wars. "For me," McLaughlin says, " 'Electra' has always had the feeling of the end of the First World War in Britain—of women who have waited and waited through the length of the war for the men to come back, and for history to come back."

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Camping with Henry and Tom—A play by Mark St. Germain, inspired by an actual camping trip undertaken in 1921 by Henry Ford, President Harding, and Thomas Edison. With John Cunningham, Ken Howard, and Robert Prosky. In previews. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

The Compleat Works of Wllm Shkspr (Abridged)—A hundred-and-five-minute version of the Bard's entire œuvre: comedies, tragedies, histories, sonnets, etc. Written by Jess Winfield, Adam Long, and Daniel Singer. Previews begin Feb. 10. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

The Death of Pilate—The Bon Accord Theatre Company presents a fourteenth-century miracle play in a medieval setting—the Cloisters. Two weekends only: Feb. 11-12 and Feb. 18-19 at 3. (Fort Tryon Park. 923-2819.)

The Heiress—A revival of Ruth and Augustus Goetz's 1947 play based on the Henry James novel "Washington Square." With Philip Bosco, Cherry Jones, Frances Sternhagen, and Jon Tenney. Directed by Gerald Gutierrez. Previews begin Feb. 9. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Henry VI—Theatre for a New Audience has divided (and edited) Shakespeare's trilogy into two parts, "The Contention" and "The Civil War," which run in repertory. Both are currently in previews. Barry Kyle is the director. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200.)

Holiday Heart—In Cheryl L. West's play, an unusual guardian angel (Keith Randolph Smith) helps a girl (Afi McClendon) cope with growing up in the inner city. Tazewell Thompson is the director. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

I Sent a Letter to My Love—A musical by Melissa Manchester and Jeffrey Sweet, based on the 1975 novel by Bernice Rubens. Opens Feb. 8 at 8 and runs through Feb. 19. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

Iphigenia and Other Daughters—Ellen McLaughlin is the author of this version of the Iphigenia and Electra stories. With Kathleen Chalfant as Clytemnestra and Seth Gilliam as Orestes. Opens Feb. 8 at 7. (Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

Loot—Next up for the Independent Theatre Company is this 1965 farce by Joe Orton. Opens Feb. 8 at 8 and runs through March 18. (House of Candles Theatre, 99 Stanton St. 353-3088.)

Love! Valour! Compassion!—Terrence McNally's drama about eight gay men has moved from Manhattan Theatre Club to Broadway. Anthony Heald replaces Stephen Spinella, but the rest of the cast, including Stephen Bogardus, John Glover, and Nathan Lane, remains with the show, which re-opens Feb. 14 at 6:45. Previews will run through Feb. 12. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Oedipus at Colonus—The Pearl Theatre Company offers Sophocles' play, in a translation by Theodore Howard Banks. Previews through Feb. 11. Opens Feb. 12 at 2. (Pearl, 80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

The Old Lady's Guide to Survival—June Havoc stars in a play by Mayo Simon. In previews. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

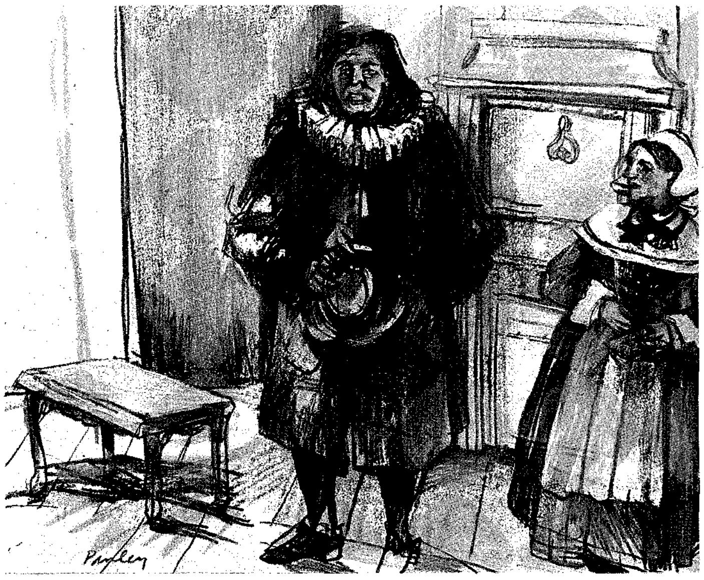
Raised in Captivity—A new play by Nicky Silver. Patricia Clarkson, Peter Frechette, Brian Kerwin, Anthony Rapp, and Leslie Ayvazian make up the cast. Previews begin Feb. 9. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

Silence, Cunning, Exile—Elizabeth Marvel portrays a Diane Arbus-like photographer named Suzie in this play by Stuart Greenman. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

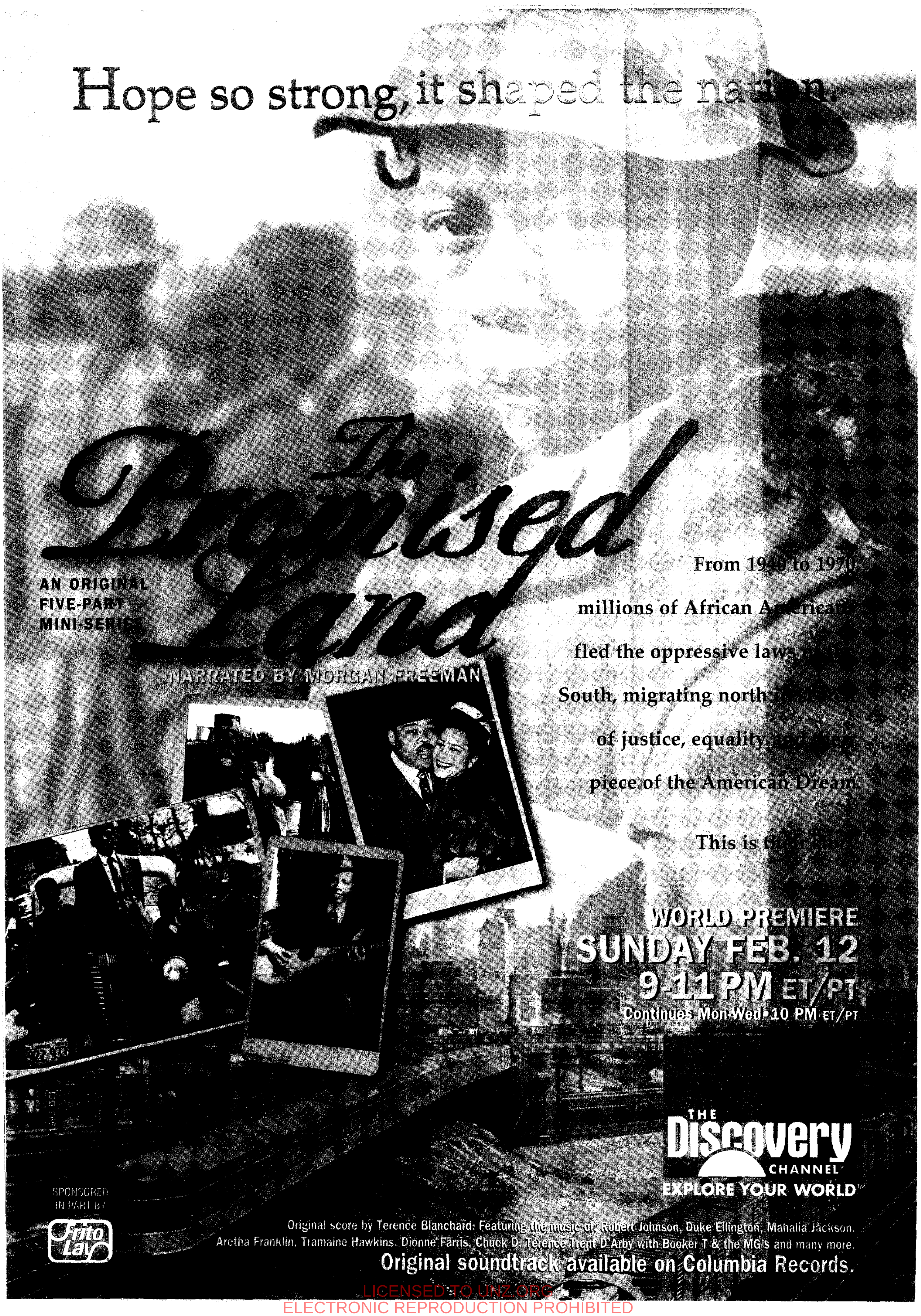
Smokey Joe's Café—The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—The early days of rock and roll are celebrated in a musical revue in which you can expect to hear "Hound Dog," "Jailhouse Rock," "Stand by Me," "Kansas City," "There Goes My Baby," and more. In previews. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

The Truth Teller—Circle Rep's second play of the season is this comedy by Joyce Carol Oates, which Gloria Muzio directed. Preview on Feb. 8. Opens Feb. 9 at 8. (Circle Repertory Company, 159 Bleecker St. 239-6200.)

Twelfth Night—The Willow Cabin Theatre Company in Shakespeare's comedy. Directed by Edward Berkeley. Previews Feb. 10-12. Opens Feb. 13 at 7. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 886-1889.)



Brian Bedford and Patricia Dunnock, in "The Molière Comedies."



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THE THEATRE–Cont'd

Uncle Vanya—Tom Courtenay has the title role in Chekhov's play. The cast also includes Amanda Donohoe, James Fox, Werner Klemperer, and Elizabeth Franz. In previews. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

After-Play—A comedy by Anne Meara, with Barbara Barrie and Rue McClanahan, among others. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Beauty's Daughter—A one-woman show by the New York-born poet-actress Dael Orlandersmith. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

Body Shop—The actors think they're in a musical about the dignity of stripping; many of the men in the audience, to judge from the whoops, think they're watching a strip show. Is this a great country, or what? Walter Marks, who wrote the song "I've Gotta Be Me," bears the responsibility, and Sue Lawless, for some reason, directed. (Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. 741-0391.)

Boy Meets Boy—The New York City Gay Men's Chorus presents a revival of the 1975 Bill Solly–Donald Ward musical. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200. Closes Feb. 19.)

Carmen—The Ridiculous Theatrical Company's version of the opera, with Everett Quinton in the title role. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271. Closes Feb. 26.)

Dylan Thomas: Return Journey and **The Truman Capote Talk Show**—Two one-man shows written by, and starring, the Welsh actor Bob Kingdom, and directed by Anthony Hopkins and Kevin Knight, respectively. The pieces are performed in repertory, and they're both laced with alcohol-enhanced humor. "Dylan Thomas" has the poetry, but "Truman Capote" is the chattier, more enjoyable affair. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 307-4100. Both close Feb. 11.)

The Hairy Ape—The Wooster Group presents a workshop production of Eugene O'Neill's 1922 play, with Willem Dafoe, Kate Valk, and others. (Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. 966-3651. Closes Feb. 19.)

Hapgood—Tom Stoppard's 1988 play, which looks at the world of espionage through the lens of particle physics (or is it the other way around?), is a kind of dramatization of Heisenbergian uncertainty. The production is as mesmerizing as the play is bewildering; Stockard Channing, Josef Sommer, and David Strathairn, under the direction of Jack O'Brien, give confident, watchable performances that nevertheless don't bring you closer to the heart of the matter. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes Feb. 19.)

The House of Yes—On Thanksgiving Day, an incestuous brother and sister (she's called Jackie-O) reënact the assassination of President Kennedy as an erotic ritual. Playwright Wendy MacLeod's "suburban Jacobean" portrait of the underside of Camelot ties—yet again—the nation's loss of innocence to that fateful day in Dallas, and thrashes the already black-and-blue American family. (SoHo Rep, 46 Walker St. 334-0962. Closes Feb. 12.)

I've Got the Shakes—The characters in Richard Foreman's latest piece of metaphysical mischief are the kind of oddballs that the March Hare might welcome at one of his tea parties; the costumes are clownish curiosities, and the set looks like a Mardi Gras float cluttered with flea-market finds. In the center of it all, Jan Leslie Harding gives a remarkably composed performance as Madeline X, a somewhat bewildered teacher who hopes to enlighten a place called Ignorance. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 533-4650.)

Jelly Roll!—The snakily elegant Vernel Bagneris plays Jelly Roll Morton, in a wonderful show that traces the musician's transformation from New Orleans dandy into jazz legend. Morten Gunnar Larsen provides the thrilling piano accompaniment. (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 265-1086.)

The Merchant of Venice—Ron Leibman is Shylock, in a production of Shakespeare's comedy directed by Barry Edelstein. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400. Closes Feb. 26.)

Missing Persons—A new play by Craig Lucas, which grew out of his 1981 one-act of the same name. The cast includes Camryn Manheim, John Cameron Mitchell, and Mary Beth Peil. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 239-6200. Closes Feb. 25.)

The Molière Comedies—Brian Bedford stars in a double bill of works by the seventeenth-century French dramatist: "The Imaginary Cuckold" and "The School for Husbands." (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Nunsense 2: The Sequel—In the second coming of writer-director Dan Goggin's hit, five talented actresses take the veil and perform a revue to raise money for their convent. There's dancing, singing, boozing, and bingo, but none of it saves the show from the clutches of cliché. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.)

One Woman Shoe—The brother-and-sister writing team of David and Amy Sedaris bill themselves as the Talent Family, and it's a rare case of truth in advertising. In their hilariously absurd new show, three women who embody all possible facets of cluelessness are told by their social-services caseworker (played to Franklin Pangbornian perfection by David Rakoff) that they must each put on a one-woman show in order to keep their benefit checks coming. The five cast members are all funny in a number of roles, but Ms. Sedaris, with her chipmunk's overbite and her remarkably plastic face, is extraordinary—she burns her way into your memory with a comic branding iron. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Closes Feb. 18.)

Public Enemy—Kenneth Branagh's play is not much more than a moody knockabout, but it does offer an enticing conceit: a Belfast boy (Paul Ronan) works the night-club circuit as a Jimmy Cagney impersonator until the Troubles turn his gangster fantasies into real-life drama. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318.)

Show Boat—Harold Prince's bighearted production of the 1927 Jerome Kern–Oscar Hammerstein II musical is epic-size, full of life and full of vision. With John McMartin and Elaine Stritch as the patriarch and the matriarch of the floating theatre, and Lonette McKee, whose moving rendition of "Bill" is the show's most intimate moment. (10/17/94) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Small Lives/Big Dreams—Director Anne Bogart and the Saratoga Springs Theatre Institute look at the end of the twentieth century in this piece, which uses excerpts from Chekhov's plays. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Closes Feb. 12.)

Sunset Boulevard—Glenn Close takes the monumental role of Norma Desmond and makes it something all her own, in Andrew Lloyd Webber's homage to Billy Wilder and Charles Brackett's 1950 fable of Hollywood corruption and dementia. Also with George Hearn, Alan Campbell, and Alice Ripley; directed by Trevor Nunn. (12/5/94) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4007.)

That's Life!—A seriocomic revue about the variety of Jewish life in America. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

Vita & Virginia—Eileen Atkins' Virginia Woolf shares the stage with Vanessa Redgrave's Vita Sackville-West in a play that Atkins put together from the letters that the women exchanged during their eighteen-year friendship. Redgrave is imposing and glamorous, but the brilliance of Woolf's writing stacks the theatrical deck in Atkins' favor, and she gives a quietly sensational, riveting performance. Zoe Caldwell directed. (12/12/94) (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

You Should Be So Lucky—A long and largely unrewarding comedy in which Charles Busch appears, out of drag, as a shrinking-violet electrologist who comes into his own via an unlikely benefactor (Stephen Pearlman). Nell Campbell plays his sister, and Julie Halston is a veritable force of nature as a Scarsdale matron. (Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

The Young Man from Atlanta—The Signature Theatre Company continues its season-long look at the plays of Horton Foote with this première, directed by Peter Masterson. Ralph Waite, Frances Foster, and Carlin Glynn are in the cast. (Kampo Cultural Center, 31 Bond St. 279-4200. Closes Feb. 26.)

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ALL IN THE TIMING: John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLOOD BROTHERS:** Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **GREASE!:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **AN INSPECTOR CALLS:** Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **JACKIE MASON: POLITICALLY INCORRECT:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN:** Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . .**PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. . . . **THREE TALL WOMEN:** Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **THE WHO'S TOMMY:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Feb. 8 at 8: "Square Dance," "Opus 19 / The Dreamer," and "Dances at a Gathering." . . . ¶ Feb. 9 at 8: "Square Dance," "Huoah" (première), and "Symphony in Three Movements." . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 8: "Swan Lake," "Firebird," and "Vienna Waltzes." . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 2: "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," "Vienna Waltzes," and an unnamed ballet. . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 8: "Fearful Symmetries," "Firebird," and "In G Major." . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 1: "Swan Lake," "Episodes and Sarcasms," and "Symphony in Three Movements." . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 7: "Square Dance," "Opus 19 / The Dreamer," and "Fearful Symmetries." . . . ¶ Feb. 14 at 8: "Huoah," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "Vienna Waltzes." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Feb. 26.)

JAZZDANCE BY DANNY BURACZESKI—The choreographer and his eight-member company return to the Joyce after five years, with three new pieces. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Feb. 8-10 at 8, Feb. 11 at 2 and 8, and Feb. 12 at 2 and 7:30.)

LIBRE-ÉCHANGE—A free-trade dance festival, featuring dancers and choreographers from our fellow NAFTA countries. Feb. 9-12 at 8:30: Lisa Marielle Bleyer and Renée Lemieux, from Montreal, in solo works and a few duos. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194.)

"A BLACK BURLESQUE"—In his new full-length work, Reggie Wilson, who in the past has drawn much of his material from African-American and African-Caribbean rituals, takes the twelve dancers of his Fist and Heel troupe on a trip from sin to holiness. The stops include a revival meeting and a jazz funeral, and there's also dancing to what Wilson calls "the nastiest lyrics I've ever heard." Wilson aims not just to reconstruct the rituals but also to re-create the emotions. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Feb. 9-10 at 8; Feb. 11 at 3, a family program; Feb. 11 at 8; and Feb. 12 at 3.)

MARGIE GILLIS—The cathartic dancer with the waist-length hair, in an evening of seven works. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Feb. 14 at 8. The engagement continues through Feb. 19.)

"THE SHINING"—Audience members—there's room for only ten a show—are led by the hand through a cardboard-box labyrinth, as dancers hurtle past. In each performance of a previous work, "Pommes Fritz," the choreographer Yvonne Meier smashed three thousand china plates. (P.S. 1, 46-01 21st St., Long Island City. For reservations, which are required, call 1-718 784-2084. Feb. 9-10 at 8 and Feb. 11-12 at 7 and 9:15. Through Feb. 26.)

NIGHT LIFE

Suede Remade

EVEN before the London Suede released their first album two years ago, they were making wildly arrogant claims. The bassist, Mat Osman, described Suede (the "London" was added on later, because some forgettable American performer had a claim on "Suede") as "important, celebratory, huge." The group's eponymous début record didn't quite live up to that description, but between the glam-rock histrionics of their lead singer, Brett Anderson, and the arena-rock charisma of their guitarist, Bernard Butler, the quartet's live shows seemed like the second coming of David Bowie. Their sound mixed sweet-and-sour melodies with plaintively perverse lyrics and had a poisonous aftertaste. Despite the retro touches, it was like a hallucinatory broadcast from the day after tomorrow.

With their second album, "dog man star," Anderson and Butler's songwriting finally caught up with the boasts. But last summer, just after they finished the record, the singer and the guitarist had a bitter falling-out, and Butler left the band. It was a serious loss: the lanky, wild-eyed Butler supplied half the star power (he was Daniel Day-Lewis as a guitar hero) and, more crucially, he wrote the lion's share of the music. But a tour had already been booked, so the band forged ahead, with a seventeen-year-old English schoolboy named Richard Oakes as their guitarist. When the new lineup comes to the Manhattan Center on February 14, it will be a little eerie to hear the next big thing perform with a key player gone. Will its future be gone, too?

CONCERTS

LIONEL HAMPTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA—Hampton's humming vibraphone, cascading two-finger piano, and faster-than-the-speed-of-sound drums began accelerating in the mid-thirties, and have slowed down only in the past several years. His vibes still have their old lightsome swing—the easy chords, the legato glances at the beat, and the oval, mushrooming sound. He rocks church, as they used to say. Presented by Highlights in Jazz. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. Feb. 9 at 8.)

WILLIE NELSON—Since reaching a settlement with the I.R.S. that cost him millions, ole Texas Willie has been in artistic and commercial overdrive. In 1993, he released "Across the Border," his best studio work in years. Last year brought "Healing Hands of Time," which featured, among other things, a sixty-piece orchestra (that's a lot of W-2s). A hairy Valentine's Day event. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Feb. 14 at 8.)

FRANCIS BEBEY—The Cameroon-born singer (and novelist, director, and composer) will also perform on the guitar, mbira (thumb piano), and Pygmy flute. With percussionist Nana Vasconcelos. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Feb. 10 at 8. For information about tickets, call 545-7536.)

ILYAS MALAYEV'S ENSEMBLE MAQOM—The Jewish Bukharan émigrés. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Feb. 11 at 8.)

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MOSCHINO

NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

(Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Feb. 14 at 8.)

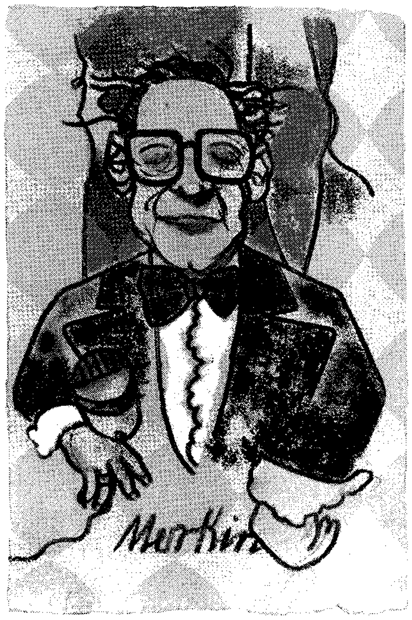
The London Suede—Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 307-7171. Feb. 14 at 8.

Kitty Brazelton—Although her band Hide the Babies is defunct, Brazelton has assembled a new outfit, Dadadah. (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. 242-4770. Feb. 14 at 8.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

A.K.A., 77 W. Houston St., at Wooster St. (673-7325)—Feb. 8: **ARNIE LAWRENCE AND THE FUNK CO-ELATION.** Lawrence's name was always popping up during the seventies, but after that he kept a low profile. As it turns out, he's been teaching a whole new generation of musicians (John Popper, the extroverted harmonica virtuoso and singer for Blues Traveler was one of his many pupils.) These days, Lawrence's jam sessions are healthy gatherings of experience and youth. Feb. 9: An evening of acid jazz.



Jimmy Scott, at Tavern on the Green.

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**JOHN PIZZARELLI** is in the midst of an extended run. Dining.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy and Johnny Parker, Fridays and Saturdays to the Freddy Francis trio, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—Feb. 8: **JOHN BARNETT & THIRD RAIL.** Feb. 10-11: The **BROOKLYN RAIN FOREST**, featuring **RANDY BRECKER.** Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—This blue-on-blue club is an institution and knows it: how many other clubs sell their own belt buckles? Feb. 7-12: Saxophonist **GEORGE HOWARD.** Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A duskily lit neighborhood bar, where pianists, bassists, and, occasionally, drummers compete for your ear. Truth and beauty usually prevail. Through Feb. 11: a trio featuring **KENNY DREW, JR.** Feb. 12: **JOHN HICKS.** Intense, inventive, and garrulous, this pianist combines the harmonic daring and aggressive stance of McCoy Tyner with the romantic fluency of Roland Hanna—not a bad middle ground. **KENNY BARRON** begins a weeklong run on Feb. 13. Barron may have succeeded too well as the pianist of choice—ubiquity and being taken for granted go hand in hand. Whatever the drawbacks of popularity and consistency, he turns every set into a lesson in unmannered, eloquent improvisation. He may be the most sympathetic accompanist around, but under the spotlight he's a star. With Paul West on bass. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and **EARTHA KITT.** . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **RONNY WHYTE** presides at the piano. Handsome, dapper, and easygoing, he is a first-class cabaret singer whose voice and delivery resemble Bobby Short's. He favors songs that have fallen by the wayside—the ones dropped from shows on opening night or those that landed on the cutting-room floor.

Eighty Eight's, 228 W. 10th St. (924-0088)—"On Fire," a Monday-night cabaret, features the music of Nirvana and Hole, as interpreted by the Completely Insane Miss Kiki Durane, a.k.a. **JUSTIN BOND.**

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—Through Feb. 12: **CLAUDIO RODITTI.** This Brazilian trumpeter and flugelhornist's rhythmic acuity and stand-back-I'm-coming-through force has been lighting up local bandstands since the eighties. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Dining.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven, 57 E. 57th St. (758-5757)—A sleek piano-and-bass room in the Four Seasons Hotel. Thursdays through Sundays, **DONALD JOHNSTON** is the featured pianist; on weekends he performs with a trio. Dining.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Across the street from Lincoln Center, this restaurant and club features a handsome bar upstairs and a surreal performance space downstairs. Through Feb. 11: the **TOM CHAPIN** quartet. *Dining.*

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—An Old New York kind of place, with dark wood panelling, white tablecloths, and brass figurine lamps. Feb. 8-11: A trio featuring **STEVE KUHN, DAVID FINCK**, and **BILLY DRUMMOND.** Feb. 14: Spend Valentine's Day with **MARY CLEERE HARAN**, a lithe Irish beauty with red hair who uses her smile not to wow the room but to light her songs. She can sing at any tempo, but she prefers slower speeds and lower tones. She also loves to talk, and some of her monologues can become pocket essays, but she's witty and she has an appreciative sotto-voce giggle, and you know that the next song, like love, is just around the corner.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Feb. 8: **TERRAPLANE**, with **HUBERT SUMLIN** and **ELLIOTT SHARP.** Sharp, who's usually heard producing unearthly sounds on a Frankensteinian instrument from which coat hangers and other metallic objects protrude, also happens to be a monster blues guitarist; Terraplane is his rootsy trio. Sumlin, another great eccentric blues guitarist, called Howlin' Wolf his boss in the fifties and sixties. His phrases veer off like Delta tributaries. Feb. 9-11: The **LOUNGE LIZARDS.** You've got to hand it to John Lurie. For almost twenty years now he's been daring listeners to decide: poseur or visionary? Either way, it's hard not to like the Lizards' wacky G-men schtick. On Feb. 12, the Knit continues its loud-music/silent-film program with "The Battleship Potemkin" and "Un Chien Andalou," and music by **MATT DARIO & E. MOTION.** The **DAVID MURRAY BIG BAND** is in residence every Monday in February. Murray's saxophone and bass clarinet may provide the focus, but the musician behind the band's shifting sonorities is Butch Morris, who crafts spontaneous arrangements and arresting colors and textures.

Match, 160 Mercer St. (343-0020)—This tragically hip SoHo *boîte* is the place to be every Sunday night, thanks to the **SHORTY JACKSON LEGACY BLUES BAND**, *featuring the eighty-nine-year-old diva* **LAUREL WATSON.** Dining.

Metropolis, 31 Union Sq. W. (675-2300)—A swank basement club, home to high-profile jazz combos. Feb. 10-11: **ARTHUR TAYLOR'S WAILERS.** Occasionally, a great jazz drummer transforms the air around the bandstand into molten rhythm. Taylor reaches more of those exhilarating peaks than practically anyone else. His Wailers are invariably youthful, straight-out-of-the-gate hard-boppers whose enthusiasm he keeps in check with his stringent concern for form. Tuesdays are given over to the **GEORGE GEE ORCHESTRA**, a seventeen-piece swing band.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—The great cabaret in the sky. It's February—time again for **ROSEMARY CLOONEY.** (Too bad February is the shortest month of the year.) Forty-four years after her first big hit, "Come On-a My House," Clooney's voice is still warm and welcoming. In performance, she's fresh and bouncy and funny, and like her fellow-sexagenarian Tony Bennett, she's been attracting an ever broadening audience of hipsters. Her new record, "Demi-Centennial," celebrates fifty years in show biz. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Michael Andrew and Claudette Sierra. Closed Mondays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A convivial and crowded jazz club where the musicians are always top-shelf. Through Feb. 12: the **ANTONIO HART** quintet. Dining.

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—The Chestnut Room may resemble a hunting lodge decorated by Liberace, but the performances here are no joke. **JIMMY SCOTT** wraps up a two-week stand on Feb. 12. With good reason, the singer has dropped the "Little" that used to front his name—there's nothing diminutive about his talent. With his quirky way of looking from one side of the room to the other, he seems to be conducting a discussion when he sings. Even on songs you've heard dozens of times before, Scott makes you listen for the next lyric as if it were a password to love and happiness. Seize the opportunity to see a man who counts Madonna and Ray Charles among his admirers. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The **ART FARMER** quintet is in the midst of a two-week run. Farmer's work proves that urbanity has its place even in jazz's spontaneous, emotional universe. By picking the perfect notes and playing them with a burnished elegance born of utter precision, the flugelhornist makes virtues of control and calculation: his sophisticated, ardent playing distills bop down to a purely lyrical state. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—Feb. 8-11: The **SHEILA JORDAN** group. Dining.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. Through Feb. 11: **ROY MERIWETHER** (piano), **TODD COLEMAN** (bass), and **VINCENT ECTOR** (drums).

ROCK, ETC.

Blarney Star, 43 Murray St. (732-2873)—Home to fine Irish music every Friday night. Feb. 10: An evening of accordion and fiddle with the **CLANCY TRADITION.**

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Feb. 9: The **IVAN NEVILLE** band. Whereas Ivan's father, Aaron, is best known for his cherubic falsetto, Ivan's own gruff, exuberant voice suggests Randy Newman, of all people. The younger Neville is also an accomplished keyboardist, having toured and recorded with the Stones and with Keith Richards' X-pensive Winos. His second album, "Thanks" (due out this month), is packed with ballads and full-tilt blues, and it features a host of distinguished guests,

RICHARD MERKIN

including Richards, Bonnie Raitt, and dear old dad. Opening for Neville is the talented singer-songwriter **MARSHALL CHAPMAN**, a Vanderbilt grad (and sorority sister of Amy Grant) whose songs have been recorded by Emmylou Harris, John Hiatt, and Tanya Tucker, among others. Feb. 11: The **ROCHES** help the Bottom Line celebrate its twenty-first anniversary with their inimitable blend of swooping, alien harmonies, unrequited-love songs, and twisted humor. A New York institution at a New York institution. Dining.

BROWNIES, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (429-8392)—Feb. 10: The **BINSLEY POPLARS** and **DIRT MERCHANTS.** Feb. 11: The **LYRES.**

CHICAGO B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—Feb. 10-11: A rare appearance by West Side legend **OTIS RUSH** and his band. Some bluesmen are nothing more than hollow collections of pat phrases and rictal poses, but Rush is the real deal: his sandpaper voice and the groaning simplicity of his guitar transcend all manner of pain and suffering. An essential experience.

DON HILL'S, 511 Greenwich St. (219-2850)—A tidy little SoHo bar with an above-average P.A. system and topnotch local bands on the docket. Friday night is Squeeze Box, a vinyl and velvet gay glamfest, hosted by Mistress Formika.

DUPLEX, 61 Christopher St., at Seventh Ave. (255-5438)—Everyone is a star here—the pianist, the bartender, the waiters, and the audience. The fabulous **DRESSING ROOM DIVAS** entertain every Friday night.

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—The **HATTERS** swing by on Feb. 10. Feb. 14: A Valentine's Day benefit for God's Love We Deliver, with **D GENERATION** and other special guests. . . . ¶ Every Sunday night, the Swing Dance Society pays homage to the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

LIMELIGHT, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—A church turned eighties hot spot, this unholy venue currently plays host to a variety of techno and alternative acts. Wednesday night is Disco 2000.

LUDLOW STREET CAFÉ, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—A modest below-stairs room that looks like a spruced-up tenement apartment. Mondays belong to **BEAT RODEO,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mixture of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, Velvets, and various pop curiosities.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—This month, Alligator Records, one of the world's finest blues labels, turns the little nook into a showroom for the fleet. Feb. 8 belongs to the Louisiana-bayou blues of **LONNIE BROOKS.** Feb. 9: The **MICHAEL HILL BLUES MOB.**

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—Many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. Feb. 11: **DISH, SPENDORA,** and **JUICY.**

MERCURY LOUNGE, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—Feb. 6: **MAGNA POP.** Feb. 9: The **FRIGGS.** Feb. 13: **HIGH PLAINS DRIFTER,** featuring "Saturday Night Live" guitarist-troll **G. E. SMITH.**

NELL'S, 246 W. 14th St. (675-1567)—A Victorian-style club, home to an eclectic crowd of downtown youngsters dancing to throbbing funk and techno-pop. Monday night is Funky Buddha, with live bands and a celebrity d.j. "on the wheels."

PADDY REILLY'S MUSIC BAR, 519 Second Ave., at 29th St. (686-1210)—**BLACK 47** usually plays on Saturdays, and Speir Mor (Gaelic for Big Sky) performs for a hearty following on Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights.

LES POULETS, 16 W. 22nd St. (229-2000)—The name may be French, but the music here is Latin: expect salsa, merengue, and the occasional cha-cha. Feb. 10: **VICTOR MANUELLE.** Dining.

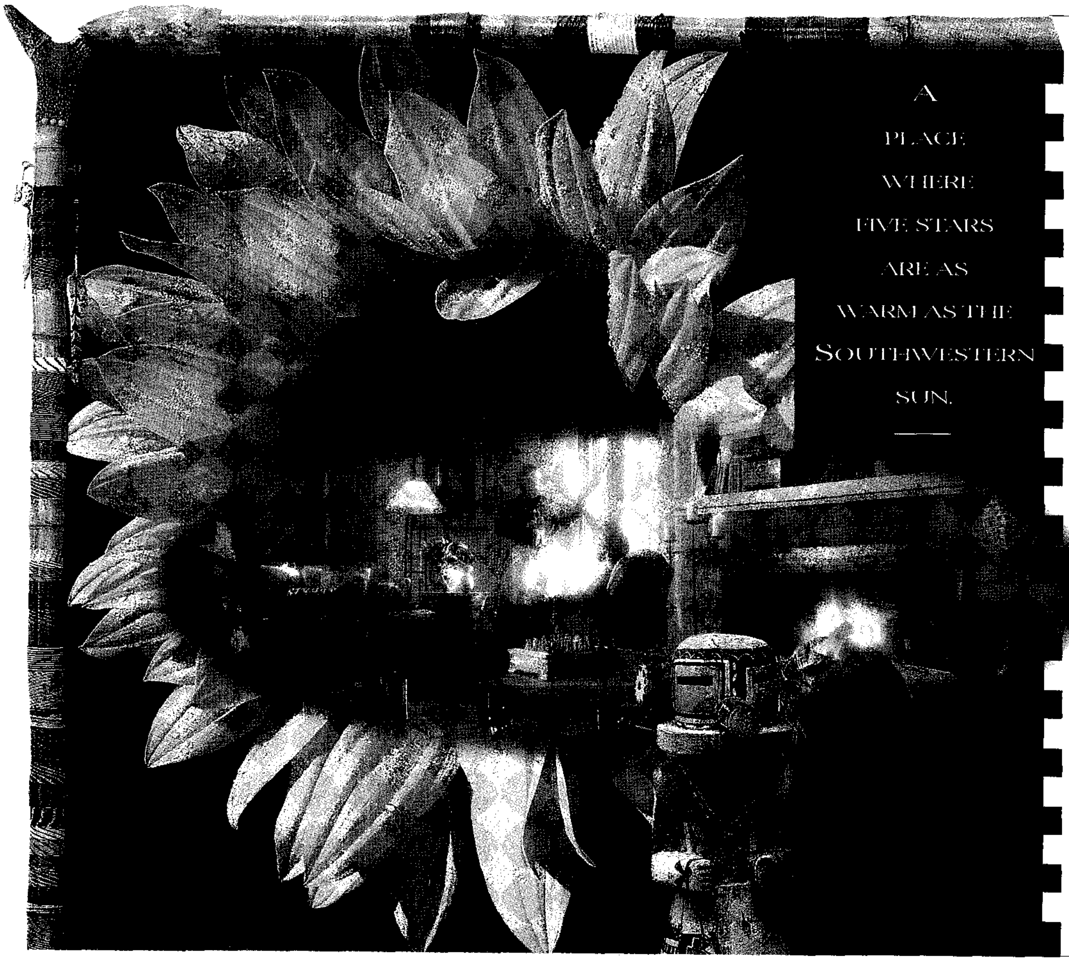
ROSELAND, 239 W. 52nd St. (247-0200)—Ballroom dancing on Thursdays and Sundays. The rest of the week it's another dark, sweaty rock club. It wasn't that long ago that **HELMET** (in on Feb. 10) was touted as the next Nirvana—but then, some people compared the Dave Clark Five to the Beatles. The truth is, Helmet is a perfectly respectable alternative-rock band, lean and energetic, noisy and daring. With local headbangers **SICK OF IT ALL.**

S.O.B.'S, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and the bossa nova. Feb. 10: Master African drummer **BABA OLATUNJI** and his amazing ten-piece Drums of Passion. Tuesday nights, S.O.B.'s presents "Flipping the Script," a rap-and-poetry party, followed by Soul Kitchen—seventies funk and R. & B. for devotees of Don Cornelius. Thursday nights belong to Giant Step, a roving collective of musicians, rappers, and d.j.s who mix jazz, funk, and hip-hop. Dining.

TRAMPS, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Feb. 8: **IVAN NEVILLE** warms up for his Bottom Line gig. The **CRANES** play on Feb. 9, but come early to see their excellent opening act, **IDAHO.** "This Way Out," Idaho's second album, was one of last year's most criminally ignored records. The band blends the guitar-driven aggression of Dinosaur Jr. with the despair and sonic austerity of bands like the Blue Nile and Helium—an unlikely combination that should be particularly striking live. The **AVERAGE WHITE BAND** picks up the pieces on Feb. 11.

WEBSTER HALL, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—A byzantine disco wonderland with four floors, a coffee shop, and a wig boutique. Wednesday is drag night. Psychedelic Thursdays feature grunge acts and cheap beer.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Singer-songwriter **RUTH GERSON** lights up this vast environmentally friendly club on Feb. 8. Feb. 10: **LOUP GAROU.** Feb. 13: Hasidic hardcore with **PIAMENTA.**



Cozy corners of this five-star resort stand as they did more than 65 years ago. A lobby floor moans a gentle greeting that only can come from aged wood. Handmade artifacts from ancient cultures adorn rustic furnishings. And vibrant desert colors accent inviting, comfortable rooms. Visitors to this quaint hideaway quickly discover why it is known as one of the Southwest's warmest places. Call your travel professional or 800-327-0396 for reservations.

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ART

Insiders' Outsider

ALFONSO OSSORIO, the subject of a small show at the Zabriskie gallery (724 Fifth Avenue, at 57th Street; through February 11), is perhaps remembered today less as a painter and sculptor than as a friend and patron of Jean Dubuffet and Jackson Pollock. It was Pollock who first brought him, in 1949, to The Creeks, the vast East Hampton estate that he bought two years later and proceeded to transform into his chef-d'œuvre. (He came from an immensely rich family of sugar planters in the Philippines, so he had the resources to indulge his fantasies.) He banned flowers from the estate's famous gardens so that nothing would interfere with the enormous international collection of conifers that was his obsession; he even went so far as to have both the exterior and the interior walls of the house painted flat black, because he wanted a jeweler's velvet backdrop for his evergreen gems.

The Creeks as Ossorio envisioned it is just a memory now. But his art remains, and it has attracted new interest since an exhibit of his drawings was mounted by the Whitney in 1992, two years after his death. The Zabriskie show consists of four large assemblage sculptures from the sixties, thickly encrusted with found objects: glass eyes, animal horns, mirrors, bits of plastic, etc. These extravagant works resemble the totemic figures that populate the early, Surrealist-inspired paintings of Pollock and Mark Rothko. Ossorio the gilded eccentric fluttered on the fringes of postwar American art; this show should bring his reputation closer to the center.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Some eighty examples of the creative confluence of Eastern and Western styles are on view in "Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress." From eighteenth-century court gowns to sequinned flapper's shifts to the recent inspirations of Issey Miyake and Romeo Gigli, luxury and fantasy are the leitmotivs. Through March 19. . . . ¶ "Greek Gold." Forget embarrassment—this is a *humiliation* of riches, as splendid an exhibition of Classical jewelry as we're ever likely to see. Choice items from the Met and the British Museum have been augmented with lovely pieces from the northern coast of the Black Sea—a rare loan from the Hermitage. The workmanship throughout is so delicate that you may want to bring a magnifying glass. Through March 26. . . . ¶ "I Tell My Heart: The Art of Horace Pippin." A selection of powerful primitive paintings by a self-taught black artist from Pennsylvania (1888-1946). Works by Jacob Lawrence, Bill Traylor, John Kane, Grandma Moses, and Arnold Friedman are also on view. . . . ¶ "The French Renaissance in Prints from the Bibliothèque Nationale de France." Through March 19. . . . ¶ "Painting and Illumination in Early Renaissance Florence, 1300-1450." Through Feb. 26. . . . ¶ "Thomas Eakins and the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Through Feb. 26. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Kandinsky: Compositions" gathers seven of the surviving "Composition" paintings, a body of work executed between 1910 and 1939. Also on view are numerous studies in oil, watercolor, ink, and pencil. Through April 25. . . . ¶ Nancy Rubins' new installation, "MOMA and Airplane Parts," is a suspended accumulation of torn and bent engine casings, fuselages, and wings. Through March 14. . . . ¶ "Max Beckmann Prints" includes lithographs, drypoints, and woodcuts from throughout the German Expressionist's career. . . . ¶ Recent photographic acquisitions are on view, including works by Rudy Burckhardt, Hans Bellmer, Jan Groover, Gilles Peress, and Mariana Yampolsky. Through April 11. . . . ¶ Portraits by Franz Gertsch, Chuck Close, Deborah Kass, Dennis Adams, and Tony Bevan, among others, can be seen in "Semblances." . . . ¶ "Jacob Lawrence: The Migration Series," a sixty-panel work from 1941, depicts black migration from the South to the North in the period between the two World Wars. (A concurrent show of Lawrence's work is at Midtown-Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.) . . . ¶ "An Eccentric Orbit: Video Art in Australia." (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Selections from the permanent collection. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SOHO, 575 Broadway—Fifty-six paintings by Antoni Tàpies, in a restrospective of the Catalan artist's career. Through April 23. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8. . . . ¶ A concurrent show of paintings by Tàpies is at Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary American Art." Through March 15. . . . ¶ In "From the Collection: Photography, Sculpture, and Painting" the curators have favored the avant-garde abstractionism of the sixties, mounting impressive installations of stripe paintings by Agnes Martin and metallic sculptures by Donald Judd. The preponderance of sixties names suggests a nostalgia for a time when the direction of advanced art was more focussed than it is today. On the other hand, a highly personalized, even confessional photography—the ravaged bohemias of Nan Goldin and Mark Morrisroe—sets the tone for the contemporary work. Through Feb. 26. . . . ¶ "Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney: Printmakers' Patron." Through March 12. . . . ¶ "Franz Kline: Black & White, 1950-61." Through March 12. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—"Thomas Cole: Landscape into History." Cole (1801-1848), the English-born founder of the Hudson River school, started out as an ardent Romantic, painting arcadian visions of New World wilderness. In his maturity, pessimism emerged. His masterwork, an allegorical series called "The Course of Empire"—five paintings that prophesy the decline of the American republic under the menacing sway of greed and militarism—anticipates the opulent narrative pictures of the late Victorians. Through April 2. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

ALTERNATIVE MUSEUM, 594 Broadway—"Discreet Objects." Maureen Connor, a pioneer of clothing art, shows how her vision evolved—from the tentative satire of "Little Lambs Eat Ivy" (1977), a construction of starchy smocked girl's dresses, to the savage bitterness of her recent work, such as a series of cast-iron industrial bottle racks, which resemble medieval instruments of torture, with black lace lingerie twisted around them. The work is tough, unlovable, and altogether admirable. Through Feb. 11. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

CHINA INSTITUTE, 125 E. 65th St.—The new Year of the Pig is celebrated in "Animals of the Zodiac," a group of fifty paintings, cutouts, sculptures, and textiles also featuring the Mouse, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, and Dog. Through March 4. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

FRICK COLLECTION, 1 E. 70th St.—"John Constable: Drawings, Watercolors, Oil Sketches, and Paintings from a Private Collection" includes many examples of the overwhelmingly horizontal compositions that have come to epitomize our ideas about the English landscape, as well as several more tumultuous pictures that bring to mind the Romantic sublime of Turner. Among the other treasures is a quartet of cloud studies from 1821-22. The small scale of these works invites close contemplation. Through Feb. 12. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—"In Praise of Aldus Manutius: A Quincentenary Exhibition." A large group of books from the house of the master printer who introduced roman and italic type, and the radical idea of portable printed books. Through April 9. . . . ¶ "The Collector's Eye," a tribute to the trustee and benefactor Julia Parker Wightman, who died last summer. Culled from the thousands of objects she gave to the library, this display includes a Flemish Book of Hours from 1440, the finest extant copy of Galileo's "Dialogo" (1632), and a group of eighteenth-century miniature children's books. Through April 2. . . . ¶ Several letters from the hand of Frederick Douglass are on view. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"A Century Apart: Images of Struggle & Spirit, Jacob Riis and Five Contemporary Photographers." Documents of the city's poor by the nation's first photojournalist, alongside work on similar themes by Martine Barrat, Mary Ellen Mark, Margaret Morton, Jeffrey Henson Scales, and Fred R. Conrad. . . . ¶ The area from Union Square to Madison Square, between Broadway and Sixth Ave., was known to the late Victorians as Ladies Mile, and "Ladies Mile: Emporia and Entertainment" revels in clothes, accessories, dolls, and memorabilia from that time and place. . . . ¶ From the 1790 handmade variety to mass-produced "Peanuts" sentiments, valentines have long been messengers of love in this bleak month. Five dozen examples of valentine cards, tokens, and decorative arts are on view. Through Feb. 28. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

THE NEW MUSEUM, 583 Broadway—Fifty large-scale photographs by Andres Serrano. Examples from all of his thematic series since 1983—including "Bodily Fluids," "Ejaculations," "Immersions" (whence came the notorious "Piss Christ"), "Morgue," and the new "Gun"—are here. Through April 9. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Saturdays, noon to 8.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—An exhibition about the works of the French fable writer Jean de La Fontaine (1621-95) is in the Solomon Room. Seventeenth-century period music sets the tone for the display of rare books, drawings, scores, and other objects. Through April 15. . . . ¶ "Garbage! The History and Politics of Trash in New York City." A show that lets you stroll through our fair city's horse-skinning, fat-rendering, and bone-boiling factories, through cattle yards, hog pens, and manure yards. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century photographs, prints, maps, sculptures, and artifacts are on view, serving to bring the streets to your nose. Through Feb. 25. . . . ¶ "e.e. cummings @ 100: An Anniversary Exhibition." (Open Mondays and Thurs-

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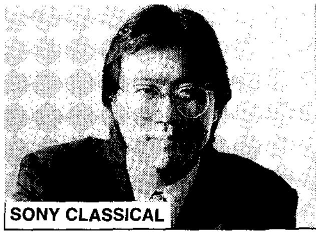

Yo-Yo Ma's latest release is entitled *The New York Album.* Concertos by Albert, Bartok, Bloch. (Sony Class.) **102•921**

ELEKTRA/NONESUCH

Kronos Quartet in *Night Prayers* with guest artists Dawn Upshaw, Djvan Gaparian, etc. (Elektra/Nonesuch) **102•962**

Itzhak Perlman performs the Mendelssohn *Concerto* and the Prokofiev *Second.* Barenboim conducts. (Erato) **469•874**

HARMONIA MUNDI

Anonymous 4 singing *Love's Illusion*—music from the Montpellier Codex, 13th Century. (Harmonia Mundi) **102•152**

SCHEHERAZADE

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Scheherazade;* **Stravinsky:** *Scherzo Fantastique.* Chailly cond. (London) **489•112**

Mahler: *Symphony No. 2 "Resurrection."* Bernstein cond. (DG) **473•769/393•769**

Schubert: *"Trout" Quintet; Quartet D.96.* J. Levine, piano; members of Berlin & Vienna Philharmonics (DG) **473•355**

Berlioz: *Symphonie Fantastique.* Solti cond. (London) **472•878**

Boccherini: *Guitar Quintets 1, 2, 3.* Artaria Quartet. (Harmonia Mundi) **471•920**

Russian Church Music. Slavyanka Men's Chorus. (Harmonia Mundi) **471•904**

Anonymous 4—An English Ladymass (Harmonia Mundi) **471•854**

Mozart: *Rondo & Horn Concertos.* Tafelmusik (Vivarte) **471•284**

John Eliot Gardiner—Famous Bach Choruses (Archiv) **488•361**

Bruckner: *Symphony No. 7.* Abbado, Vienna Phil. (DG) **488•338**

Ibert: *Escales, Flute Concerto;* more. Dutoit cond. (London) **488•320**

Handel: *Water Music.* Mackerras. St. Luke's Orch. (Telarc) **462•523**

Rachmaninov: *Vespers.* Shaw Festival Singers (Telarc) **462•499**

Beethoven: *Piano Conc. No. 5 "Emperor".* R. Serkin, Ozawa cond. (Telarc) **462•416**

Fauré: *Piano Quartets.* Ax, Stern, Laredo, Ma. (Sony Class.) **458•554**

Rachmaninov: *Piano Con. No. 2; Rhapsody.* Cecile Licad; Abbado (CBS Mast.) **456•103**

Cecilia Bartoli—If You Love Me (London) **455•014**

Glenn Gould Edition—Bach: *Goldberg Variations;* etc. Historic 1955 Debut Album (Sony Class.) **450•676**

Vladimir Horowitz—Discovered Treasures (Sony Class.) **450•502**

Mahler: *Symphony No. 4.* B. Hendricks; Salonen, L.A. Philharm. (Sony Class.) **449•116**

Dvorak: *Sym. No. 8;* **Janacek:** *Sinfonietta.* Masur, New York Phil. (Teldec) **483•909**

Beethoven: *String Quartets Nos. 6 & 7.* Cleveland Quartet (Telarc) **484•162**

Faure & Durufle: *Requiems.* Blegen, Morris; Shaw cond. (Telarc) **483•370**

Dvorak In Prague—A Celebration with Ma, Perlman, von Stade; Ozawa cond. (Sony Class.) **481•176**

Wagner Gala. Music for *Lohengrin, Tannhauser,* etc. Abbado cond. (DG) **478•925**

Bloch: *America (An Epic Rhapsody); Concerto Grosso.* Schwarz cond. (Delos) **477•752**

Placido Domingo—Opera Classics (EMI Classics) **477•737**

Poulenc: *Concerto For 2 Pianos; Organ Conc.;* more. Roge, Hurford, Deferne; Dutoit cond. (London) **485•656**

Chant—Benedictine Monks Of Santo Domingo (Angel) **477•067**

Haydn: *Sym. 101 "Clock"; Sym. No. 103 "Drumroll".* Bruggen, Orch. 18th Century (Philips) **477•034**

Holst: *The Planets.* Previn, Royal Philharm. (Telarc) **462•564**

"Thirty-two Short Films About Glenn Gould"—orig. sndk. (Sony Class.) **481•945**

Bach: *Partitas For Violin.* Viktoria Mullova (Philips) **478•933**

JOHN TAVENER
AKATHIST OF THANKSGIVING

Tavener: *Akathist Of Thanksgiving.* Neary, BBC Sym. & Singers (Sony Class.) **102•988**

Wagner: *The "Ring" Without Words.* Maazel, cond. (Telarc) **462•549**

Beethoven: *Octet Op. 103;* more rarely-heard works for winds. Neidich & Mozzafiato (Vivarte) **485•615**

Dvorak: *Piano Quartet & Quintet.* M. Pressler, piano; Emerson String Quartet (DG) **485•557**

The Segovia Collection, Vol. 4—The Baroque Guitar. (MCA Classics) **375•998**

Bruckner: *Symphony No. 3.* Solti cond. (London) **478•941**

Granados: *Goyesca.* A. de Larrocha, piano (London) **477•042**

Luciano Pavarotti—My Heart's Delight (London) **477•729**

Christopher Parkening Plays Vivaldi (EMI Classics) **477•075**

Secrets Of The Old—Complete songs of Samuel Barber. Hampson, Studer, Browning; Emerson String Quar. (DG) **488•411/398•412**

Ives: *Symphony No. 3; Unanswered Question;* etc. Orpheus Chamber Orch. (DG) **488•395**

Copland: *Grohg; Hear Ye, Hear Ye!*—2 early ballet scores. Knussen cond. (Argo) **487•041**

Schoenfield, Paul: *Four Parables; Klezmer Rondos; Vaudeville.* Soloists, John Nelson cond. (Argo) **487•033**

Liszt: *Dante Symphony; Dante Sonata for Piano.* Barenboim, soloist and cond. (Teldec) **487•025**

Beethoven/Schumann: *Piano Quartets.* I. Stern, Y. Ma; E. Ax; J. Stern. (Sony Class.) **486•662**

Jose Carreras—The Great Carreras (Philips) **486•589**

Borodin: *Symphonies Nos. 1 & 2,* etc. Ashkenazy (London) **486•555**

Bartok: *The Wooden Prince; Cantata Profana.* Boulez, Chicago Sym. & Chorus (DG) **477•711**

"Schindler's List"—Orig. Sndtrk. (MCA) **472•795**

Mendelssohn: *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Harnoncourt cond. (Teldec) **469•601**

Pachelbel: Music For Organ. Werner Jacob (Virgin Class.) **471•177**

Mozart: *Oboe Concerto; Bassoon Concerto; Flute & Harp. Conc.* Koopman cond. (Erato) **469•635**

Orff: *Carmina Burana.* Mehta, London Phil. & Choir (Teldec) **469•593**

Tchaikovsky: *Sym. No. 6 "Pathetique".* Herbert von Karajan cond. (DG) **469•510**

Orpheus Chamber Orchestra—Prokofiev: *Classical Symphony;* Bizet: *Symphony In C;* more. (DG) **469•254**

Ruth Ann Swenson
EMI

Ruth Ann Swenson—Positively Golden (EMI Classics) **102•111**

Dawn Upshaw And Thomas Hampson—Long Time Ago (Teldec) **487•090**

Berlioz: *Messe Solennelle.* Monteverdi Choir; John E. Gardiner cond. (Philips) **478•917**

J.S. Bach: *Suites For Orchestra.* Hogwood cond. (L'oiseau Lyre) **476•952/396•952**

Schubert: *Sym. No. 9, "The Great".* Bernstein cond. (DG) **476•903**

Ivo Pogorelich—Ravel: *Gaspard de la nuit;* Prokofiev: *Sonata No. 6.* (DG) **476•887**

Schubert: *Die Winterreise.* Fischer-Dieskau; Brendel at the piano (Philips) **476•846**

Beethoven: *Grosse Fugue.* Guarneri Quartet (Philips) **476•770**

Maxim Vengerov—Virtuoso Vengerov. Kreiser, Paganini, etc. (Teldec) **475•715**

Bach: *Brandenburg Concertos* (complete). I Musici (Philips) **475•541/395•541**

Brahms: *Piano Conc. No. 2.* Ashkenazy; Haitink, Vienna Phil. (London) **474•759**

Prokofiev: *Romeo & Juliet Suites 1, 2;* more. Skrowaczewski cond. (MLPR) **474•700**

Tchaikovsky: *Piano Concerto;* **Schumann:** *Piano Concerto.* Byron Janis, pianist (MLRP) **474•643**

NEW AGE

Guitar Sampler Vol. II—Various Artists (Windham Hill) **483•438**

Liz Story—My Foolish Heart (Windham Hill) **483•305**

Shadowfax—A Windham Hill Retrospective (Windham Hill) **483•214**

William Ackerman—Past Light (Windham Hill) **482•810**

Paul Winter—Prayer For The Wild Things (Living Music) **481•903**

Yanni—Live At The Acropolis (Private Music) **475•178**

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Musical Massage, Vol. 1. Various Artists (Relaxation Co.) **471•151**

Ottmar Liebert & Luna Negra—The Hours Between Night & Day (Epic) **464•149**

Various Artists—Celtic Odyssey (Narada) **460•964**

Sounds Of Nature—Sampler (Special Music Co.) **444•208**

A WINTER'S SOLSTICE IV

A Winter's Solstice IV—Various Artists (Windham Hill) **482•315**

Earth Sounds—Earth Sounds Sampler (Miramar) **489•658**

Jan Hammer—Beyond The Mind's Eye (Miramar) **489•617**

Tangerine Dream—220 Volt Line (Miramar) **489•583**

Jon Anderson—Deseo (Windham Hill) **489•518**

In Search Of Angels—Various Artists (Windham Hill) **488•247**

Ray Lynch—Nothing Above My Shoulders But The Evening (Windham Hill) **487•108**

Windham Hill Sampler '94—Various Artists (Windham Hill) **483•487**

Kitaro—Dream (Geffen) **444•299**

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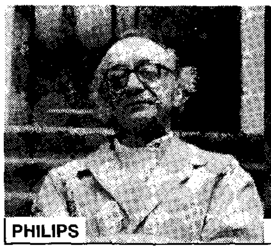
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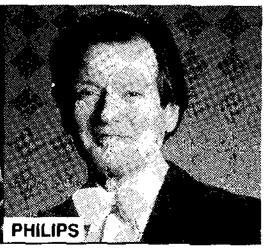
PHILIPS

Sir Neville Marriner conducts Mozart's *Great Mass in c*—with Kiri Te Kanawa, Robert Lloyd; etc. (Philips) **103•010**

RAVEL · BOLERO

Ravel: *Bolero; Ma Mere L'oye; Rapsodie;* more. Boulez, Berlin Phil. (DG) **486•563**

Mozart: *Piano Conc. 26, "Coronation";* more. Murray Perahia (CBS Mast.) **328•740**

Beethoven/Mozart: *Piano Quintets.* Barenboim & members Chicago, Berlin Sym. (Erato) **103•481**

Dmitri Hvorostovsky—Songs Of Love And Desire; Bellini, Rossini, etc. (Philips) **103•044**

Haydn: *Piano Sonatas 32,47,53 & 59.* E. Ax. *(Sony Class.)* **102•970**

Chopin: *Cello Sonata; Polonaise Brillante;* more. E. Ax, P. Frank, Yo-Yo Ma (Sony Class.) **102•913**

Shostakovich: *Sym. No.13 "Babi Yar".* N.Y. Phil. & Chorus; Masur cond. (Teldec) **485•581**

Adams: *The Chairman Dances; Harmonielehre;* more. Rattle cond. (EMIClassics) **485•573**

Tchaikovsky/Arensky: *Piano Trios.* Cho-Liang; Bronfman, Hoffman, *(Sony Class.)* **485•565**

Ceremonial Music For Trumpet & Organ. Bach, Purcell, Gounod, etc. Smedvig & Murray (Telarc) **484•204**

R. Strauss: *Don Juan; Also Sprach Zarathustra.* Von Karajan, Berlin Phil. (DG) **469•239**

Luciano Pavarotti—Ti Amo: Puccini's Greatest Love Songs (London) **469•114**

Jessye Norman—Brava, Jessye (Philips) **469•080**

Anne-Sophie Mutter—Carmen-Fantasie (DG) **469•072**

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 5, Egmont Overture;* more. Masur, NY Phil. (Teldec) **468•330**

John Browning—Barber: The Complete Solo Piano Music (Musicmasters) **467•514**

John Bayless, Piano—The Puccini Album (Angel) **467•191**

Respighi: *Fountains & Pines Of Rome; Roman Festivals.* Sinopoli cond. (DG) **466•243**

Debussy: *Nocturnes; La Mer;* etc. Solti, Chi. Sym. (London) **463•109**

Pachelbel: *Kanon;* Tchaikovsky: *Serenade For Strings.* L. Slatkin cond. (Telarc) **462•655**

Chanticleer—Mexican Baroque (Teldec) **487•017**

Rachmaninov: *Sym. No. 2; The Rock.* Pletnev cond. (DG) **486•548**

Mozart: *Sonatas For Piano And Violin.* Isaac Stern, Yefim Bronfman (Sony Classical) **486•035**

Anne Sofie Von Otter—Grieg: Song Lieder (DG) **474•734**

Kiri Te Kanawa—"The Sorceress" (Philips) **101•949**

Julian Bream—Bach Guitar Recital (EMI Classics) **101•105**

Tchaikovsky: *Violin Con.;* etc. Sarah Chang (EMI Classics) **457•341**

Mieczyslaw Horszowski—Bach, Schumann, Chopin. (Elektra/Nonesuch) **435•503**

Mozart: *Sinfonia Concertante;* more. Cho-Liang Lin, J. Laredo. (Sony Class.) **432•955**

Mozart: The Complete Piano Sonatas, Vol. 2. Philippe Entremont (Pro Arte) **409•961**

Tchaikovsky: *Swan Lake & Sleeping Beauty Ballet Suites.* Muti cond. (EMI Classics) **334•680**

Arthur Grumiaux—Bach: Complete Sonatas And Partitas (Philips) **102•194/392•191**

Westminster Choir—O Magnum Mysterium (Chesky Records) **100•594**

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The 3 Tenors—In Concert: Carreras/Domingo/Pavarotti (London) **423•418**

Vivaldi: *The Four Seasons.* Nigel Kennedy, Eng. Chamber Orch. (EMI Classics) **414•672**

Wagner: *"Rienzi" Overture;* etc. Mehta, NY Phil. (Sony Classical) **443•226**

Kathleen Battle & Wynton Marsalis—Baroque Duet (Sony Class.) **439•372**

Brahms: *Serenade No. 2; Haydn Var.;* etc. M.T. Thomas, London Sym. (Sony Class.) **435•123**

Julia Pantelyat, Dmitris Manelis'—Ukrainian Cello Works Of Lisogub, others (Dorian) **103•549**

Tchaikovsky: *Sym. No. 1 "Winter Dreams" and No. 2 "Little Russian."* Gerard Schwarz cond. (Delos) **103•531**

Hovhaness: *Spirit Murmur* (String Quartets). Shanghai String Quartet (Delos) **103•523**

Cheryl Studer—Strauss: *Four Last Songs;* Wagner: *Wesendonck-Lieder;* more (DG) **103•002**

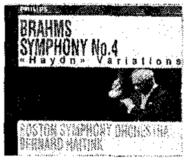
Verdi: *Falstaff.* Pons, DiNissa; Muti, La Scala Orch. (Sony Class.) **102•939/392•936**

Honegger: *Symphonies. Nos. 2 & 3; Pacific 231.* Mariss Jansons cond. (EMI Classics) **102•095**

Joel Cohen—Nueva Espana (Erato) **475•921**

Mozart: *Symphony No.39,* more. Giulini, Berlin Philharmonic. (Sony Class.) **449•207**

Gorecki: *Sym. No. 3.* Dawn Upshaw, soprano; Zinman cond. (Elektra/Nonesuch) **441•923**



Brahms. *Symphony No. 4; Haydn Variations.* Haitink, Boston Sym. (Philips) **100•883**

Maria Callas—La Divina 2 (EMI Classics) **102•087**

Awadagin Pratt—A Long Way From Normal. Piano works: Liszt, etc. (EMI Classics) **102•053**

Messiaen: *Illuminations Of The Beyond.* (Written for 150th Anniversary of NY Phil.) Myung-Whun Chung (DG) **100•834**

Brahms: *Quartets For Strings, Op. 51/1 & 67.* Borodin String Quartet (Teldec) **100•826**

Mozart: *Serenade In B-Flat For 13 Wind Instruments.* Mackerras cond. (Telarc) **102•178**

Beethoven: *Sym. Nos. 2 & 8.* Sawallisch, Royal Concertgebouw Orch. (EMI Classics) **101•956**

Chopin: *Sonata No. 2; 4 Ballades.* A. Gavrilov, piano (DG) **476•911**

LIGHT CLASSICS

John Williams & Aaron Copland—Music For Stage And Screen (Sony Class.) **478•982**

Gil Shaham/Goran Sollscher—Paganini For Two. Italian music for violin and guitar. (DG) **478•958**

"Amadeus"—*original* sndtrk. Marriner, Acad. St. Martin (Fantasy) **478•909/398•909**

Sensual Classics II—Various Artists (Teldec) **477•760**

Heavy Classix, Vol. 2—Various Artists (Angel) **477•059**

Gershwin Plays Gershwin (Elektra/Nonesuch) **473•348**

Angel Romero—A Touch Of Romance (Telarc) **462•671**

Dinner Classics—Romance. (Sony Masterworks) **433•870**

Yo-Yo Ma/Bobby McFerrin—Hush (Sony Mast.) **432•930**

The Spielberg/Williams Collaboration. Boston Pops Orchestra. (Sony Class.) **431•254**

Beethoven—Grt. Hits (CBS Mast.) **330•563**

Jose Carreras—Zarzuelas (Erato) **102•954**

Jean-Pierre Rampal—"Crossover USA" (Milan) **102•863**

Michael Chertock—Cinematic Piano. Music from E.T., Casablanca, etc. (Telarc) **102•145**

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days through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Forty-seven paintings and works on paper by Emma Amos. Through March 19. . . . ¶ "Sam Gilliam: Recent Monoprints." Through May 14. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. The following lists lead off with new shows.)

Christian Boltanski—Two installations incorporating eleven hundred small archival photographs, found snapshots, and bed linens. Opens Feb. 10. Through March 11. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

R. B. Kitaj—New oils and drawings by the Cleveland-born painter, who has lived in London since 1958. (The show coincides with a retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum that starts Feb. 17.) Opens Feb. 8. Through March 4. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

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Carl Andre—"Sand-Lime Instar," a re-creation of the famous "Equivalents I-VIII" of 1966: eight two-tiered stacks of a hundred and twenty sand-lime bricks each. Through Feb. 11. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Rudy Burckhardt—Realistic paintings that, with a touch of the naïve, depict the Maine woods around the artist's home. Through Feb. 18. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Earl Cunningham (1893-1977) / **Grandma Moses** (1860-1961)—A pairing of work by two folk painters who were stylistic soulmates but whose careers and creative visions could not have been more different. Through March 18. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

Robert De Niro (1922-93)—Paintings from the seventies and eighties. Through March 4. (Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St.)

Roni Horn / **Nayland Blake**—Watercolors of literary quotations and references on dense black backgrounds. / Two "video objects," in which small groups of video equipment playing tape loops function as sculpture, along with a pair of straightforward video works, "Negative Bunny" and "Ghost Bunny." Through March 11. (Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Alfred Jensen (1903-81)—"Where the Gods Reside," twelve oil compositions based on the configurations of pre-Columbian pyramids as seen from the air. Vividly colored and thickly impastoed, Jensen's work seems out of step with the trends of the sixties, when he did his best-known paintings, but it anticipates the pattern-and-decoration movement of the seventies and the output of more recent artists, such as Philip Taaffe. Through Feb. 11. (Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St.)

Jacob Lawrence—A retrospective of forty paintings, including several from the series "Struggle: From the History of the American People," and eight new works. Through Feb. 25. (Midtown-Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. . . . ¶ The artist's sixty-panel "Migration Series," from 1941, is on view at the Museum of Modern Art.)

Ann Lofquist—Yet another show of landscape views of rural Maine, these by a young painter who often includes figures in her settings. Through Feb. 24. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

Alfonso Ossorio (1916-90)—A collection of the painter and sculptor's wildly colorful assemblages. Through Feb. 11. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Philip Pearlstein—Huge new paintings of nude figures in interior settings. Through March 4. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

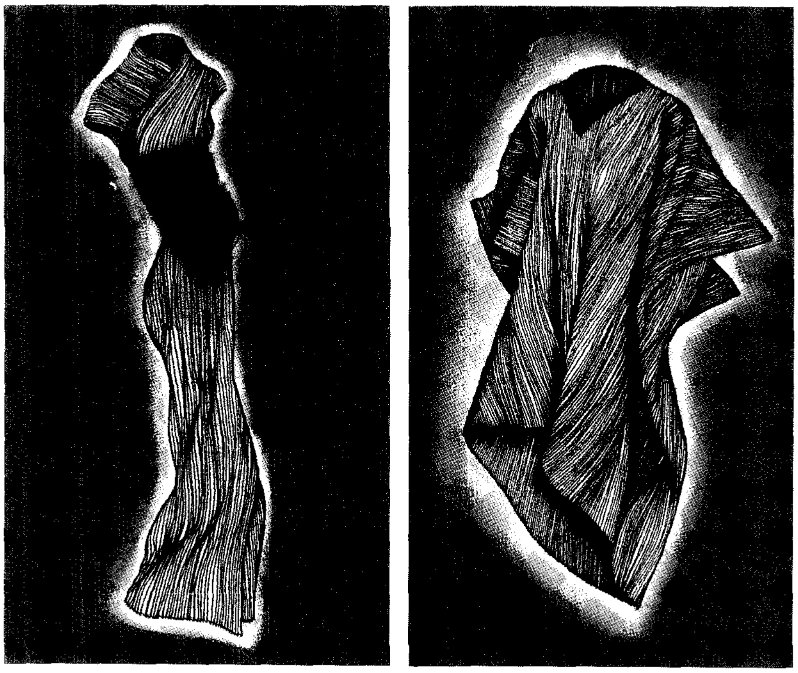
Fairfield Porter (1907-75)—Thirty-three watercolor portraits, interiors, and Maine and Hamptons landscapes, in the artist's familiar, easygoing representational style. Through March 4. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St.)

Don Van Vliet—Thickly impastoed paintings in strong colors on white backgrounds, by the man once known as Captain Beefheart. Through March 18. (Werner, 21 E. 67th St.)

Jack Tworkov (1900-82) / **Sam Francis** (1923-1994)—Paintings from 1963-73 by an artist who moved from Abstract Expressionism to a cooler style influenced by minimalism. The earliest, "Barrier Series #5" (1963), is the sort of de Kooning/Kline mishmash that prevailed among artists of the Tenth Street school. The later paintings, influenced by artists as diverse as Twombly and Mangold, are on the whole quite lovely. Through Feb. 11. / The gallery has organized a small memorial exhibition for the late artist, who enjoyed far greater esteem in Europe than in his native United States. Several gouaches on paper from the "Blue Balls" series represent Francis at his peak. Through Feb. 18. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Tom Uttech—Paintings of dramatic forest vistas inspired by the artist's regular trips to Quetico Provincial Park, in Ontario. Through Feb. 25. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St.)

"California in the 60s"—Sculptures and paintings produced by artists of the Bay Area Funk scene, including Robert Arneson, Manuel Neri, Robert Hudson, Joan Brown, Peter Saul, William Wiley, and Roy DeForest. Through Feb. 28. (Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.)


"Orientalism," at the Metropolitan Museum.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Richard Long / **Alighiero e Boetti** (1940-94)—"Somerset Willow Line" (1980), an arrangement of six hundred and eight willow branches, by the peripatetic British artist. / "The Thousand Longest Rivers in the World" (1976-78) is a nine-by-fifteen-foot work in which the names and lengths of the rivers are embroidered in white silk on a field of different shades of green. Opens Feb. 9. Through April 29. (Blum, 99 Wooster St.)

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Richard Artschwager—An elegant exclamation point of perfectly turned aluminum hovering over a basin of polished gray granite. Scarcely a yard high, the piece nonetheless asserts stature and seriousness—a Washington Monument for wee folk. Through Feb. 25. (Kent, 67 Prince St.)

Joseph Beuys (1921-86)—Prints and multiples drawn from the gallery's private collection, including "How to Explain Painting to a Dead Hare," a photograph of the artist, with his head painted gold, holding the contorted remains of a hare, and photographs of drawings that were scratched into the sand on a beach at low tide, accompanied by a vial of the sand. Yes, he's precious. But what an infrequent pleasure it is to be puzzled by an artist whose intellect and humor make his work worth puzzling over. Through Feb. 11. (Gibson, 568 Broadway.)

Donald Judd (1928-94)—Sculptures made between 1963 and 1990. Through Feb. 25. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Luciano Fabro—A new marble installation by an Arte Povera luminary. Through March 1. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Jutta Koether—A series of paintings titled "Frontage" is the first show in the gallery's new space. Through March 12. (Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Antoni Tàpies—A show of recent works by the Catalan painter, which coincides with a retrospective at the Guggenheim SoHo. Through March 4. (Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St.)

Bill Traylor (1854-1947)—Works in poster paint and pencil on cardboard, by a self-taught artist who did not start painting until his eighties. Through Feb. 25. (Ricco/Maresca, 152 Wooster St.)

David Wojnarowicz (1954-92)—Paintings, works on paper, photographs, and photocollages. Through Feb. 28. (Bromm, 90 West Broadway.)

"Emblems and Contours"—Works by Baechler, Basquiat, Dine, Lasker, Lichtenstein, Rauschenberg, Schnabel, Twombly, Warhol, and Wegman. Through Feb. 11. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

(Auction houses display their wares several days before most sales and welcome the merely curious along with the potential bidder. Call the numbers listed for viewing schedules.)

Sotheby's—Collectors of animation art get their chance to bid on more than two hundred and fifty hand-painted cel setups used in the making of Walt Disney Pictures' "The Lion King." (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000. Feb. 11, with sessions at 10:15 and 2.)

ART—Cont'd

Ticktock on the Block—Clocks and watches will be purveyed at both of the big houses this week. (Christie's, Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1119. Feb. 13. . . . ¶ Sotheby's. Feb. 14-15.)

Oenophile Alert—Morell & Company, the wine merchants, hosts an auction of wide-ranging holdings from forty American cellars, including that of John E. Oxley, former president of the Wine & Food Society of New York. (Union League Club, 38 E. 37th St. Feb. 11, with sessions at 9 and 1:45. For information about both the auction and a related tasting dinner, to be held the preceding evening, call 688-9370.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Robert Yarber—Nocturnal landscape views of cemeteries, casinos, quick stops, and factories, all just as eerily lit as the artist's paintings. Opens Feb. 11. Through March 11. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

•

Debbie Fleming Caffery—Recent black-and-white photographs taken in Mexico. Through Feb. 25. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St.)

Baron Adolf de Meyer (1869-1946) / **Toni Frissell** (1907-88)—A hundred and twenty vintage magazine and travel prints from throughout his career. / A large retrospective of black-and-white photographs by an artist who had tours of duty with *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and the Women's Army Corps. Through Feb. 12. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Aharon Gluska—Enlarged photos of prisoners at Auschwitz during the Second World War, which have been painted over with clear acrylic and partially obscured by areas of black paint. Through March 4. (Mann, 42 E. 76th St.)

Nan Goldin—The artist's "Ballad of Sexual Dependency," a forty-five-minute color-slide-with-soundtrack presentation, will be screened three times a day, at 1, 3, and 5. Also on view are new medium-format pictures taken in Tokyo, Berlin, Salzburg, and New York, and twelve large-scale works. Through April 16. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

William Klein—"In and Out of Fashion" is a suggestive exhibit rather than a sweeping, satisfying overview. But there's so much going on in Klein's best work that even a show restricted to a single aspect of it gives you a sense of his versatility: you see the satirist, the Surrealist, the editor, and the postmodernist—to name just a few of the Kleins on view. Through Feb. 26. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Danny Lyon—A large-scale exhibition representing many phases of a diverse career, from photographs of the civil-rights movement taken when Lyon was a Magnum photographer, to his trademark shots of bikers, hot-rodders, and hippies, to intimate photomontages of his family. The most powerful images are those done in Texas prisons in 1967-68; one chilling assemblage unites a mug shot of a cop-killer, his death sentence, and a pathetic, childish painting by the condemned man. Through April 8. (Lowinsky, 578 Broadway.)

Genevieve Naylor (1915-89)—A retrospective of the photojournalist and fashion photographer's career, including work she did for the A.P., *Harper's Bazaar*, *McCall's*, and *Look*. Through March 18. (Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway.)

David Seidner—Front and back views of classically posed nudes against black backgrounds. Through March 4. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Cindy Sherman—Works that combine the familiar props—fake body parts, masks, mannequins—with such new techniques (for her) as multiple exposures and alternative developing processes. Through Feb. 18. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Minor White (1908-76)—Selections from throughout the career of this artist, a co-founder of *Aperture*. Through Feb. 25. (292 Gallery, 120 Wooster St.)

"Masterpieces of Soviet Photography: 1917-35"—A Constructivist group of works by Alexander Rodchenko, Dmitri Debabov, Georgei Zelma, Arkadi Shaikhet, and others. Through Feb. 25. (Schickler, 52 E. 76th St.)

"Let's Go to the Movies"—Many things cinematic, among them a woman next to a Clark Gable marquee, by Walker Evans; a couple embracing in a theatre, by Weegee; and an empty theatre, by Hiroshi Sugimoto. Through Feb. 25. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St.)

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, the Museum of the City of New York, and the New Museum.)

A Danny Lyon retrospective, at Lowinsky.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Hold the Obit

Music critics, impresarios, and aging singers with declining bookings have all been lamenting the death of the song recital, but if this week's offerings are any indication, their grief is premature. On February 11, in fact, three recitals coincide. Bass Samuel Ramey's affair, at Carnegie Hall, adheres to the old grab-bag tradition and is likely to attract listeners who care more about vocal splendor than about artful programming. At Alice Tully Hall, mezzo-soprano Joan Morris and pianist William Bolcom—pioneers in the art form's current overhaul—offer a clever selection that characteristically obliterates the boundary between popular and classical; they treat everything from Gay Nineties favorites to Ives and Gershwin as if it were a masterpiece. At the 92nd Street Y, the inquiring musical minds of the New York Festival of Song delve into the recesses of early-twentieth-century French exoticism, performing Roussel, Delage, et al. Francophiles can also savor a *mélodie* recital with baritone Bernard Levasseur and pianist Noël Lee (on February 9, at the Miller Theatre) and the United States début of the much discussed French contralto Nathalie Stutzmann (on February 13, at the Walter Reade Theatre). All told, the dying patient looks remarkably robust.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; and for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**TURANDOT,** with Gwyneth Jones, Teresa Stratas, Lando Bartolini, and Paul Plishka; conducted by Nello Santi. (Feb. 8 at 8 and Feb. 11 at 1:30.) . . . **IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA,** with Jennifer Larmore, Stanford Olsen, Jeffrey Black, Enzo Dara, and Nicolai Ghiaurov; David Atherton. (Feb. 9 at 8.) . . . With François Loup instead of Mr. Dara. (Feb. 11 at 8.) . . . With Ms. Larmore, Mr. Olsen, Thomas Allen, Mr. Dara, and Mr. Ghiaurov; Mr. Atherton. (Feb. 14 at 8.) . . . **CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA** (with Maria Guleghina, Kristján Jóhannsson, and Bruno Pola) and **PAGLIACCI** (with Daniela Dessì, Nicola Martinucci, Sherrill Milnes, and Dwayne Croft); Christian Badea conducting both. (Feb. 10 at 8.) . . . **LA TRAVIATA,** with Veronica Villarroel, Frank Lopardo, and Roberto Frontali; John Fiore. (Feb. 13 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

"Opera Senza Rancor"—An operatic spoof by Michael Capasso and Bill Van Horn. (Dicapo Opera Theatre, 184 E. 76th St. 288-9438. Feb. 10-11 at 8 and Feb. 12 at 3.)

Amato Opera Company—Presenting Bartók's "Bluebeard's Castle." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Feb. 12 at 3.)

Opera Orchestra of New York—In a concert version of Massenet's "Hérodiade," with soprano Renée Fleming, mezzo-soprano Grace Bumbry, tenor John Keyes, baritone Yuri Mazurok, and bass Philip Kang. Eve Queler conducts. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 14 at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Kurt Masur leads a musical tour of Europe, touching down on the Czech Republic (with Smetana's Overture to "The

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CLASSICAL MUSIC-Cont'd

Bartered Bride"), Hungary (Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2"), Armenia (Alexander Arutiunian's Trumpet Concerto, featuring Philip Smith), Austria (Johann Strauss, Jr.,'s "Gypsy Baron" Overture), Poland (the mazurka from Stanislaw Moniuszko's opera "Halka"), Germany (marches by Beethoven), Finland (Sibelius's "Finlandia"), and France (Ravel's "La Valse"). No passports required. (Avery Fisher Hall. Feb. 9-11 at 8 and Feb. 14 at 7:30.)

New York Pops—A Cole Porter-oriented program that features sopranos Jeanne Lehman and Nancy Reed. Skitch Henderson conducts. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 10 at 8.)

Chanticleer—The men's chamber choir sings a pair of concerts at the Metropolitan Museum. Feb. 10 at 8, at the Temple of Dendur: Music from the fourteenth-century ars nova, by Landini and Machaut, including the latter's Mass.... ¶ Feb. 11 at 2:30, in the Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium: A lecture-concert exploring plainchant. (Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949.)

Manhattan School of Music Symphony—Glen Cortese conducts two free performances of Mahler's "Songs of a Wayfarer" (with baritone Jeffrey Ray) and Symphony No. 9. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. Feb. 10 at 8.... ¶ Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. Feb. 12 at 4.)

Goliard Chorale and Chamber Players—Presenting Toshiro Mayuzumi's "Prelude for String Quartet," Schumann's Piano Quintet, and Kodály's Missa Brevis. (Steinway Reformed Church, Ditmars Blvd. at 41st St., Astoria. Feb. 11 at 7:30.... ¶ St. James Episcopal Church, Madison Ave. at 71st St. Feb. 14 at 8. For information about tickets to either concert, call 1-718 728-8927.)

Gregg Smith Singers—The choir performs twentieth-century music from the United States, Canada, and Mexico. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Feb. 11 at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-2990.)

City Island Baroque Ensemble—Ilan Rechtman is the soloist in Bach's Harpsichord Concertos in F Minor, G Minor, and A Major. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 1-718 885-2478. Feb. 12 at noon.)

Israel Philharmonic Orchestra—At Avery Fisher Hall, Zubin Mehta conducting. Feb. 12 at 3: A concert of firsts, comprising Webern's Passacaglia (Op. 1), Bruch's Violin Concerto No. 1 (with Midori), and Brahms' Symphony No. 1.... ¶ Feb. 13 at 8: Ari Ben-Shabetai's "Sinfonia Chromatica," Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 (with Yefim Bronfman), and Strauss's "Ein Heldenleben."

Canterbury Choral Society—Performing Bach's B-Minor Mass, with Charles Dodsley Walker on the podium. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Feb. 12 at 4. Admission by contribution.)

Jupiter Symphony—Jens Nygaard conducts a suite of movements by Corelli, Haydn's Symphony No. 55, Tchaikovsky's "Élégie," and Mozart's C-Major Piano Concerto (K. 503, with Jerome Lowenthal). (Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, 152 W. 66th St. Feb. 13 at 2 and 7 and Feb. 14 at 8. For information about tickets, call 799-1259.)

RECITALS

Tokyo String Quartet—The ensemble continues its survey of Beethoven's quartets by playing those in C Minor (Op. 18, No. 4), B-Flat Major (Op. 74, the "Harp"), and C-Sharp Minor (Op. 131). (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 8 at 8.)

Bargemusic—Feb. 9 at 7:30 and Feb. 12 at 4: An all-Brahms concert. Violinist Mark Peskanov and pianist Phillip Bush perform the C-Minor Scherzo; Nathaniel Rosen and Mr. Bush offer the F-Major Cello Sonata; and all join for the C-Major Piano Trio.... ¶ Feb. 14 at 7: A Valentine's Day candlelit dinner-concert that includes performances of short works by Dvořák, Stravinsky, Elgar, and Mendelssohn. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061.)

Noël Lee and Friends—The American pianist, an expatriate in Paris for the past four decades, is joined by colleagues in two duo-recitals at the Miller Theatre. Feb. 9 at 8: *Mélodies* by Debussy, Chausson, Duparc, and Fauré, with baritone Bernard Levasseur.... ¶ Feb. 12 at 3: A two-piano recital, with Christian Ivaldi, comprising Saint-Saëns' "Caprice Héroïque," Franck's "Les Éolides," Chabrier's "Trois Valses Romantiques," and Debussy's "Divertissement" and "La Mer." (Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799.)

Brentano String Quartet—Feb. 9 at 8: Performing music by Bruce Adolphe; with pianist Marija Stroke. (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. 242-4770.)... ¶ Feb. 13 at 7: The foursome plays Beethoven's C-Minor Quartet (Op. 18, No. 4), and Mark Steinberg, the group's first violinist, joins with Ms. Stroke to perform Debussy's Violin Sonata. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719.)

Quintet of the Americas—The woodwind ensemble performs original music for winds by Nielsen, Villa-Lobos, and Karel Husa (the première of his "Five Poems for Woodwind Quintet"), as well as arrangements from Bernstein and Copland. (Weill Recital Hall. Feb. 10 at 8.)

Kronos String Quartet—Performing the opening concerts of a weeklong engagement at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Majestic Theatre. Feb. 10 at 8: Crumb's "Black Angels," Glass's Quartet No. 5, and Górecki's Quartet No. 2 ("Quasi una Fantasia").... ¶ Feb. 11 at 8: LaMonte Young's "Chronos Kristalla," a new work based on two of the composer's earlier works. (651 Fulton St. 1-718 636-4100. Through Feb. 18.)

Joan Morris and William Bolcom—The wife-and-husband singer-and-pianist team explores the past century of American song, from Ives to popular classics by Leiber and Stoller, with plenty of Tin Pan Alley detours along the way. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Feb. 11 at 8.)

New York Festival of Song—The group expands beyond its usual proportions as seven singers, two pianists, an actor, a narrator, and an instrumental ensemble offer a concert of songs that reflect the penchant for Orientalism in early-twentieth-century France, including songs and vocal chamber music by Maurice Delage (his "Quatre Poèmes Hindous"), and Ravel (his "Chansons Madécasses"). For a change of pace, the ensemble will also offer a semi-staged performance of André Messager's boulevard revue "L'Amour Masqué." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Feb. 11 at 8.)

Samuel Ramey—Bass, singing some *arie antiche;* arias by Handel, Mozart, and Gluck; and songs by Schubert, Barber, Griffes, and Gershwin. Pianist Warren Jones assists. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 11 at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—Performing quartets by Juan Crisóstomo Arriaga and Brahms (in A Minor), as well as Mozart's String Quintet in B-Flat Major (K. 174, with violist Steven Tenenbom). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Feb. 11 at 8.)

Musicians' Accord—Presenting pianists Sara Laimon and Amy Rubin in rhythmically complex contemporary solo and duo-piano works by Ms. Rubin, Ligeti, and African composers Akin Euba, Gamal Abdel-Rahim, and J. H. K. Nketia. (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. Feb. 11 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—Violinist Felix Galimir assists the group's members in performances of Mozart's D-Major Divertimento (K. 131) and Quintet for Piano and Winds, a set of Haydn's English canzonets (with soprano Carol Wilson and fortepianist Robert Wolinsky), and Schoenberg's String Quartet No. 2 (also with Ms. Wilson). (Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway. Feb. 12 at 2. For information about tickets, call 212-840-7470.... ¶ Weill Recital Hall. Feb. 14 at 8.)

New York Philharmonic Ensembles—Members of the orchestra play Alexander Arutiunian's "Armenian Scenes" (for brass quintet), Shostakovich's String Quartet No. 8, and Tchaikovsky's A-Minor Piano Trio. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Feb. 12 at 3.)

LISTENING BOOTH

Eichendorff-Lieder by Wolf and Korngold, with baritone Boje Skovhus and pianist Helmut Deutsch (Sony Classical). So many lieder-singing baritones are breaking onto the scene that we seem to be heading into a new golden age of German art-song interpretation. In his first big-label recording, the Danish baritone Boje Skovhus joins the front-runners of the young generation (who include the Austrian Wolfgang Holzmair, the German Andreas Schmidt, and the Englishman Simon Keenlyside). Skovhus's voice—deep and slightly husky, but with sweet-timbred highlights—threatens to lose its focus on sustained tones during the opening tracks, but misgivings fade when the recital springs to life with the rousing succession of Wolf's "Lieber alles," "Der Scholar," and "Unfall," interpreted in the strongly articulated style codified by Fischer-Dieskau. From there on through the concluding set of Korngold songs (which positively melt in Skovhus's mouth), it's all delicious.

Jon Gillock—Organist, playing Messiaen's "Les Corps Glorieux" and "Diptyque." (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. 254-8553. Feb. 12 at 3.)

Anner Bylsma—The cellist, an eminent presence in the historically informed performance movement, plays Bach's Unaccompanied Suites No. 1, No. 3, and No. 5. Presented by Music Before 1800. (Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. 666-9266. Feb. 12 at 4.)

Something Fishy—A performance of Schubert's "Trout" Quintet, in a second-floor music salon. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. Feb. 12 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)

Daniel Gaisford—Cellist, with pianist Norman Krieger, performing the second sonatas of Beethoven and Brahms. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. Feb. 13 at 6. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 772-4448.)

Ayako Yoshida and Semyon Fridman—The violinist and the cellist perform solos and duets by Bach, Kodály, Beethoven, and Ysaÿe, as well as the Handel-Halvorsen Passacaglia. (Weill Recital Hall. Feb. 13 at 7. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 333-8200.)

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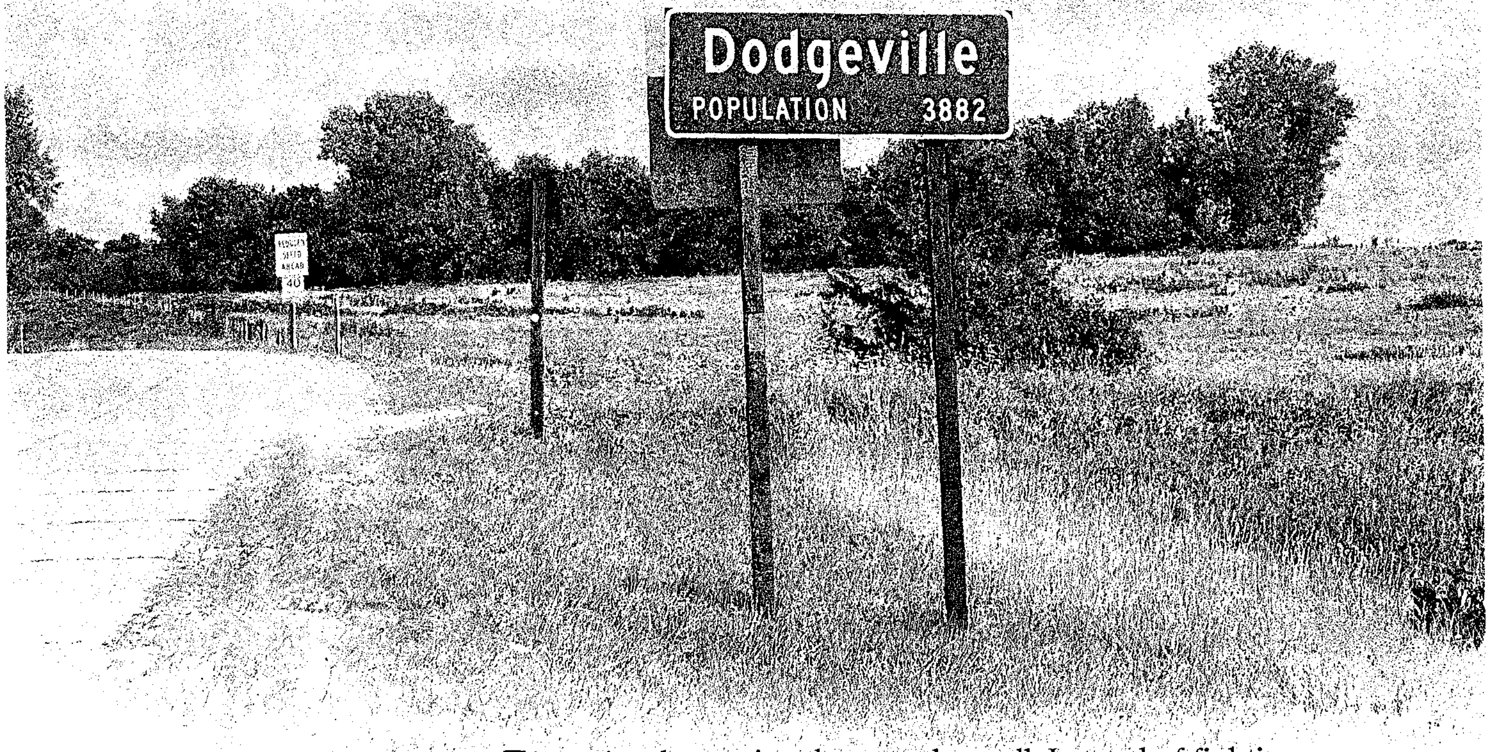

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CLASSICAL MUSIC—Cont'd

Nathalie Stutzmann—In her United States début, the French contralto offers a song recital that encompasses works by Mozart, Schumann, Mahler, Debussy, and Poulenc; with pianist Inger Södergren. (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. Feb. 13 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

Shura Cherkassky—The apparently immortal pianist (whose credits include a command performance at the White House—for President Harding) presents a typically scintillating program that mixes well-known masterpieces with out-and-out curiosities: Handel's D-Minor Suite; fantasies by Schumann (in C Major, Op. 17) and Chopin (in F Minor, Op. 49); Chopin's First Ballade; short works by Anton Rubinstein; and Liszt's Polonaise No. 2. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 13 at 8.)

Lydian String Quartet—The foursome plays Harbison's Quartet No. 1, Lee Hyla's Quartet No. 3, Leo Ornstein's Piano Quintet (with Janice Weber), and Thomas Oboe Lee's "Morango Almost a Tango." (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Feb. 14 at 8.)

American String Quartet—Performing three quartets by Mozart: in D Major (K. 575), B-Flat Major (K. 159), and D Major (K. 499). (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. Feb. 14 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Garden Variety Dogs—The Westminster Kennel Club presents its hundred and nineteenth annual showcase of champion wolfhounds, water dogs, vizslas, shih tzus, Finnish spitzes, and so on. To reach the big event, every one of the twenty-five hundred contestants must have earned championship standing with the American Kennel Club. Standards for owners are not as rigorous, and one of the pleasures the crowds can enjoy while awaiting the naming of the crown pooch is plain old people-watching. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Feb. 13-14, from 8:30 A.M. to 11 P.M.)

Love and Chocolate—A sweetheart assortment of Valentine's week activities. Feb. 8 at 8: Criminologist Lynn Chancer looks at power and powerlessness in a talk titled "Sadomasochism in Everyday Life." (Brecht Forum, 122 W. 27th St. 242-4201.) . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at noon: The thirty entries in the Domaine Carneros wedding-cake competition will be on display before the afternoon judging. To taste the cakes, one must return for the reception honoring the pastry chefs, at 6. (Christie's East, 219 E. 67th St. 675-4984.) . . . ¶ Feb. 13 at 6: As part of the Edith Wharton Women of Achievement lecture series, Carole Klein, author of "The Single Parent Experience," discusses "Women Writers Reconciling Love and Work." (National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park S. 677-9725.) . . . ¶ Feb. 14: Thirty-four couples take the plunge, one every fifteen minutes, from 10 to 7, at the Empire State Building, Fifth Ave. at 34th St. To qualify, couples must submit a one-page essay, "Why We Want to Get Married at the Empire State Building." The final thirty-four will be chosen at random from the entrants. For information, call 736-3100, ext. 337. . . . ¶ Feb. 14 at 6:30: Swing dancing in the Winter Garden, to the music of the Manhattan School of Music Jazz Orchestra. (World Financial Center, Battery Park City. 945-0505.) . . . ¶ Cards from the heyday of penmanship, ranging from an elaborate hand-cut valentine made in 1760 to a circa-1977 Snoopy card, are on view in "Centuries of Sentiment: Valentines Past and Present." (Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.)

Snow Day—Herman's, clothier to the sportive, is outfitting Central Park's Great Lawn with six inches of snow for a token day of winter and its neglected sports, on Feb. 11, from 9 to 4. They're schlepping in the skis, too—five hundred pairs, with boots and poles, both downhill (they'll build the hill) and cross-country, for citybound skiers to strap on free. For those determined to look awkward, snowshoes are available. Throughout the day, expert skiers will perform acrobatic freestyle tricks, which require bouncing on a trampoline in skis. Only in New York.

Readings—Feb. 8 at 8: Ethan Canin reads from his latest collection of stories "The Palace Thief." (Endicott Booksellers, 450 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 6: Novelists Rick Moody ("The Ice Storm") and Jim Lewis ("Sister") read from their work. (KGB, 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Feb. 13 at 8: Jorie Graham, Kenneth Koch, Derek Mahon, and others read from their translations and reinterpretations of Ovid's Metamorphoses. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.) . . . ¶ Feb. 13 at 8: Dale Peck and Anne-Christine D'Adesky read from the work of authors who inspired them. (A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Feb. 14 at 6: Julie Landau reads from her translations of tz'u, a Chinese lyric-verse form that grew out of prostitutes' songs. (China Institute, 125 E. 65th St. 744-8181.)

Talks—Feb. 9 at 8: The Guerrilla Girls, in a panel discussion, assess their role as conscience to the art world. (School of Visual Arts, 209 E. 23rd St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 2:30: The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies presents "Sissies and Tomboys," a symposium on gender nonconformity. (City University Graduate Center Auditorium, 33 W. 42nd St. 642-2924.) . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 7: Critic Helen Vendler looks at the visual sources of the poetry of William Butler Yeats. (Casa Italiana, 24 W. 12th St. 431-7920.) . . . ¶ Feb. 13 at 8: Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and Cornel West discuss images of the black male, in connection with the Whitney "Black Male" exhibition. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.) . . . ¶ Feb. 13 at 8:15: Dance critic Deborah Jowitt talks with choreographer Mark Morris. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

Walks—Feb. 10 at 1:30: A valentine tour at the New York Botanical Garden looks for lovebirds, nests, and signs of spring. (Bronx Park. 1-718 817-8700.) . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 1: Urban Explorations examines Colonial history in Harlem and Morningside Heights. For information, call 1-718 721-5254.

FOR KIDS

(Accompanied by parents or other adults.)

Sesame Street Live—When Big Bird lands on the New York stage, the sensitive ornithomorph promptly runs away—in the mistaken belief that his friends have forgotten his birthday. The neighborhood's Muppets and nice humans get together and find him. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 307-7171. Feb. 9-10 at 10:30; Feb. 11 at 10:30, 2, and 5:30; and Feb. 12 at 1 and 4:30.)

Black History Month Events—Feb. 11-12 at noon: At the South Street Seaport Museum, kids learn the farewell rituals of African seafarers from the Gold Coast. (165 John St. No charge beyond museum admission.) . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 1: Lubangi Muniania leads masano, the call-and-response and chanting games that originated in Zaire. At 1:45: West African historian Mahamadou Salieu Suso tells stories and plays the kora, a twenty-one-string instrument. (Museum for African Art, 593 Broadway. No charge beyond museum admission.)

The Heart Is a Bargain Hunter—Grandparents get in free all weekend at the Children's Museum of Manhattan. On Saturday, the generations can practice drumming, and on Sunday they can make Valentine's Day cards together, craft their own percussion instruments to accompany the Harbor for Boys and Girls percussion ensemble, or just listen quietly during a story-time session with Linda Milstein, author of "Grandma's Jewelry Box." (Children's Museum of Manhattan, 212 W. 83rd St. Feb. 11-12, from 10 to 5. No charge beyond museum admission.)

"Young Abe Lincoln"—A portrait of the President as a young rail-splitter bursting into song. (Promenade Theatre, Broadway at 76th St. 677-5959. Feb. 11 at 12:30 and Feb. 12 at 10:30 and 12:30.)

Music of the Andes—The Andean band Inkhay plays songs from the high-plains countries, as part of a family-concert world-music survey. The group performs on panpipes, flutes, and a variety of stringed instruments, including the charango, a small guitar made from an armadillo shell. (Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. 346-8510. Feb. 12 at 3.)

"Family Musik"—Conductor Rob Kapilow demonstrates the storytelling powers of instrumental music, using Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" to show how it can raise and frustrate hope, drop a clue, and lead the listener through a plot. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Feb. 12 at 2.)

"For Children by Children"—Peter Sis, author of "The Three Golden Keys," hosts a reading with New York City elementary- and junior-high-school students, who will present their own work. Afterward, other children will have a chance to read in an open-mike session. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 645-5848. Feb. 11 at 11.)

"'Rubbish!' She Cried"—The Paper Bag Players turn old cardboard and paper into comedy, in a musical that toys with the silliness hidden in everyday trash. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. Feb. 11-12 at 2. Through March 5.)

The Westminster Kennel Club Show, at Madison Square Garden.

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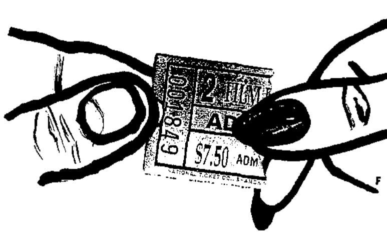


THE MOVIES

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

Billy Madison—A comedy in which Adam Sandler, of "Saturday Night Live," must repeat grades one through twelve in six months before his father will give him control of the family's hotel empire. With Bridgette Wilson. Written by Sandler and Tim Herlihy. Directed by Tamra Davis. Opening February 10.

The Quick and the Dead—Sharon Stone dons leather pants and packs a six-gun in a Western directed by Sam Raimi. With Gene Hackman, Russell Crowe, and Leonardo DiCaprio. Written by Simon Moore. Opening February 10.

Shallow Grave—The new roommate in an Edinburgh flat turns up dead, leaving behind a pile of cash, in Danny Boyle's shocker. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) Opening February 10. (Village Theatre VII and Lincoln Square.)

The Wooden Man's Bride—In northwestern China in the nineteen-twenties, kidnappers disrupt the arranged marriage of a young woman (Wang Lan). With Chang Shih, Wang Yumei, and the Taiwanese pop star Kao Mingjun. Directed by Huang Jianxin. Written by Yang Zhengguang, from "Wu Kui," by Jia Pingau. In Mandarin. Opening February 8. (Film Forum.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre addresses and phone numbers are listed on page 28.)

Bad Company—Ellen Barkin plays an industrial spy, and Laurence Fishburne is the C.I.A. agent who infiltrates her espionage ring, in a movie directed by Damian Harris. (Village East Cinemas, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

Before Sunrise—The hip ennui that Richard Linklater conjured up in "Slacker" and "Dazed and Confused" seemed rooted in Texas, but it transplants beautifully to Vienna, where his third film is set. The movie is provocatively plotless: Jesse (Ethan Hawke) and Céline (Julie Delpy) meet on a train, decide to get off together, and have themselves a fine, sleepless time before parting the next day. That's it: various threats loom up and fade away, and the only suspense comes from wondering whether the two characters (who are pretty much the only characters) will stop talking long enough to have sex. The extended takes and lazy conversations bring the movie within inches of boring, but there is real audacity in the casual bookishness of the script (by Linklater and Kim Krizan) and in the shrugging rhythms of the direction. The charm—the midsummer enchantment—never feels forced; it steals up and wins you. A true romance.—A.L. (1/30/94) (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

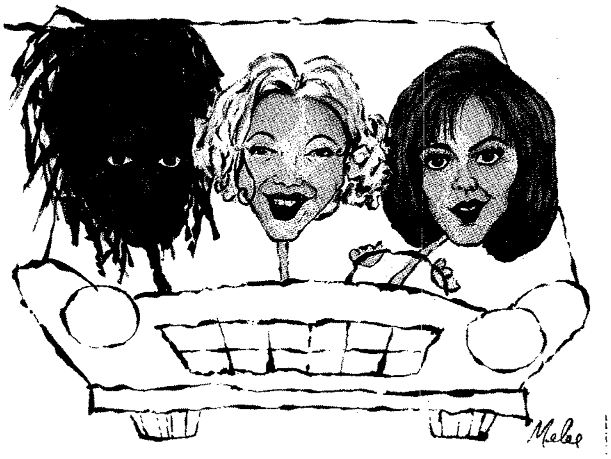
Boys Life—Three short films by New York directors, on the subject of gay life: "Pool Days," by Brian Sloan; "A Friend of Dorothy," by Raoul O'Connell; and "The Disco Years," by Robert Lee King. (Quad Cinema.)

Boys on the Side—In this semi-comic tearjerker, three seemingly incompatible women—a salty gay singer (Whoopi Goldberg), a young, restless beauty (Drew Barrymore), and an ailing career gal (Mary-Louise Parker)—bond on the run and settle down in Tucson. The ad says they share "the unconditional love that is always cherished by women and often envied by men." The picture is schmaltzy and phallus-shrivelling, too. Earthy, Sexy, and Sickly create a nontraditional family; men damage or frustrate them. (The token male happiness-maker, a cop who woos Barrymore, is so sweet and slow that you half expect him to compare life to a box of chocolates.) Herbert Ross directed, from a script by Don Roos.—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

Brother Minister: The Assassination of Malcolm X—A documentary about the 1965 murder of the controversial Nation of Islam leader. Written and directed by Jack Baxter and Jefri Aalmuhammed. (57th St. Playhouse.)

Death and the Maiden—Ariel Dorfman's fashionable, overblown stage play turned into a flat, uninspired thriller by Roman Polanski. In an unnamed Latin-American country, an attorney (Stuart Wilson) and his wife (Sigourney Weaver) receive a visit from one Roberto Miranda (Ben Kingsley). The wife, convinced that Miranda is the man who tortured and raped her during their country's era of oppression, determines to get her own back; but all she has to go on is his voice, and the movie titillates us with the possibility that she has the wrong man. A more vulgar director—and less serious performers—might have had the nerve to admit that this is schlock posing as moral philosophy, but Polanski and his cast honor the self-importance of the script, and the result is fairly unwatchable.—A.L. (1/16/94) (Village Theatre VII and Paris.)

Germany Year 90 Nine Zero—The hero of Jean-Luc Godard's film is the American secret agent Lemmy Caution, who was also the protagonist of his 1965 film "Alphaville" (and who is played in both pictures by Eddie Constantine). Lemmy Caution is, we're told, "the last spy," returning to the West after the end of the Cold War; Godard follows him on the slow trek back from eastern Germany, through rubble, ominous-looking construction projects, and streets that unexpectedly summon the ghosts of German culture. Both the old spy and the



Whoopi Goldberg, Drew Barrymore, and Mary-Louise Parker in "Boys on the Side."

aging filmmaker—the last modernist—are unnerved by the eerie, somnolent peace of reunified Germany; they're nostalgic for conflict. It's a brilliant movie, and it demonstrates convincingly that the elegiac, reflective tone of Godard's recent work shouldn't be taken as evidence of mellowing: even his elegies are provocations. In French and German.—T.R. (2/6/94) (Little Theatre, Public Theatre.)

Higher Learning—In this blood-and-thunder campus melodrama by John Singleton, parallel story lines about a Midwestern misfit turned skinhead (Michael Rapaport), a smart black track star (Omar Epps), and a naïve Orange County coed (Kristy Swanson) converge with an apocalyptic bang. Singleton diagrams such issues as athletic exploitation and racial polarization on the cheapest poster board and rouses snickers with his heavy-breathing treatment of Swanson's budding bisexuality.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Highlander: The Final Dimension—The flimsy sword-and-sorcery series reaches its promised conclusion as the immortal Highlander (Christopher Lambert) strives to defeat the evil challenger Kane (Mario Van Peebles). The mountain landscapes of Scotland and Japan are more heroic than the two combatants, who end up facing off in present-day New York and New Jersey anyway. Lambert is brooding and wooden—a piece of kindling that won't kindle. Van Peebles tries too hard to rise to his Genghis Khan getup: his performance is led around by his nose ring.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, 23rd St. West Triplex, Columbus Circle, and Embassy.)

Hoop Dreams—An engrossing documentary about two inner-city Chicago teen-agers, William Gates and Arthur Agee, who aspire to careers in professional basketball. The filmmakers—Steve James, Frederick Marx, and Peter Gilbert—follow them all the way through high school. In the course of the movie's patient, sympathetic narrative (the running time is close to three hours), our reaction to the heroes' progress changes decisively, and for the better: at first we're assessing their chances, measuring them for N.B.A. uniforms; by the end we're rooting for them simply to survive the process without losing all their exuberance and drive and creative spirit.—T.R. (10/17/94) (Quad Cinema and Carnegie Hall Cinema. . . . ¶ Whitney Museum; Feb. 9.)

Immortal Beloved—Bernard Rose's new biography of Beethoven (Gary Oldman) filters our view of the musician through the composer's secretary, Anton Schindler (Jeroen Krabbé, who looks more like Beethoven than Oldman does). But the film is flat. Only once does it aim high, in a great kitsch-cosmic shot of the infant genius lost in a sea of stars. Valeria Golino, Isabella Rossellini, and the admirable Johanna Ter Steege play the three main women in Beethoven's life—the nominations for Best Supporting Muse. There's no surprise in the winner, nor in the choice of music—a roster of greatest hits.—A.L. (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, East 85th Street, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

In The Mouth of Madness—Sam Neill stars in John Carpenter's new horror film, about a missing novelist (Jürgen Prochnow) whose latest book drives its readers insane. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Gotham Cinema, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

Jerky Boys—A movie featuring the antics of Johnny B. and Kamal, two New York-based performers whose shtick is making prank phone calls. Directed by James Melkonian, who also wrote the screenplay with Rich Wilkes, John G. Brennan, and Kamal Ahmed. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Cinema II, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1.)

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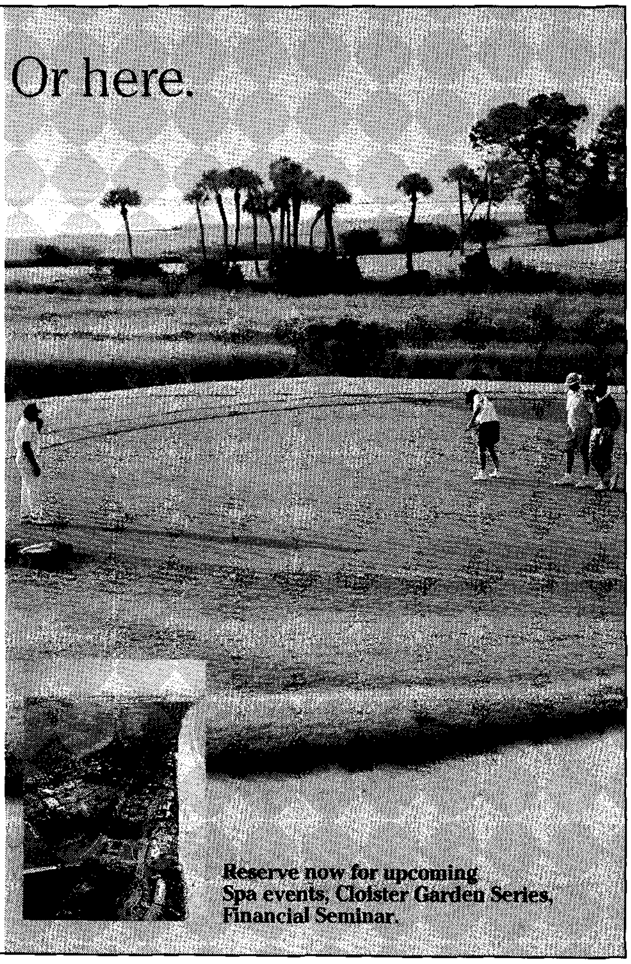

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PROJECTIONS

Sundancing

THE combustible mixture of religion and sex got a lot of screen time at last month's Sundance Film Festival, in Park City, Utah. Antonia Bird's "Priest," a melodramatic account of a gay Catholic cleric who hears an incest story in the confessional, had audiences arguing into the small hours, but it was Edward Burns' "The Brothers McMullen," a movie about an Irish-Catholic family from Long Island, that really had people jostling for tickets. Those who made it in never quite settled down—they were too busy chuckling at Burns' volley of jokes about abortion, adultery, and masturbation, and howling at his use of a knife and a banana to demonstrate how women have their way with men.

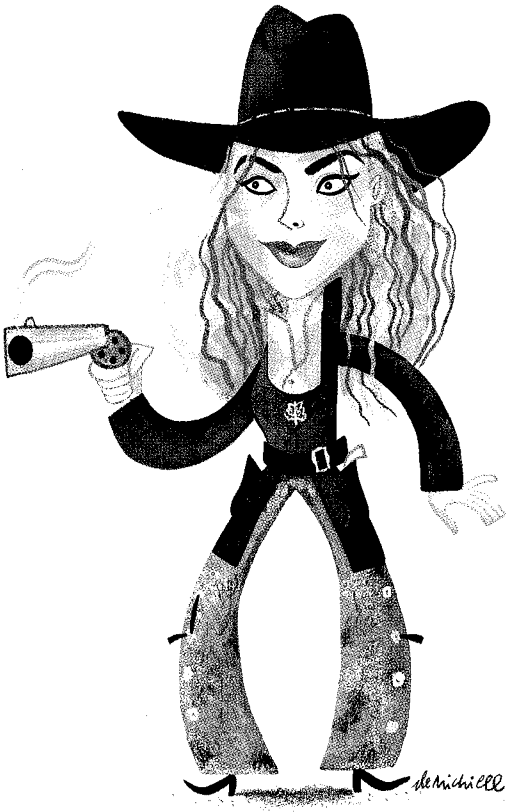
Larry Clark's "KIDS," which Miramax showed at a midnight screening as a work in progress, made audiences squirm in an altogether different way. The cinematic counterpart of Clark's famously unpitying photographs of street youth, "KIDS" tracks a couple of just-past-puberty pups as they get high and prowl Manhattan in search of virgin flesh. In its visceral approach, the movie recalls Gus Van Sant's "Mala Noche" (and Van Sant is one of the producers of "KIDS"), but Clark's method is much more heartless. When the film is released later this year, viewers will have to decide whether its nihilistic pornography is a cautionary tale or just the director getting off on the thrill of the shoot.

After a dose of Clark's upsetting adolescent realism, I turned gratefully to the adult dramas "Before the Rain" and "Once Were Warriors" (both are being released this month) and to Tom DiCillo's good-natured comedy, "Living in Oblivion." Ostensibly about the perils of low-budget filmmaking, DiCillo's movie is really a demonstration of how any given day can go disastrously wrong. DiCillo based the picture on his cast-related nightmares as the director of the cursed project "Johnny Suede." As if in karmic response, the casting here went miraculously right, particularly in the case of Steve Buscemi, who, as DiCillo's stand-in, combines the eyes of Don Knotts, the tresses of D'Artagnan, and the soul of a poet.

—BRENDAN LEMON

CURRENT FILMS—Cont'd

JLG by JLG—In Jean-Luc Godard's idiosyncratic diary movie, which has the subtitle "A Self-Portrait in December," the sixty-four-year-old filmmaker, looking like a dishevelled, distracted old crank, rattles around in his dimly lit apartment and goes for solitary, bundled-up walks in a wintry Swiss landscape. The opening scenes set a dirgelike tone: Godard, contemplating a photo of himself as a boy, generalizes his personal melancholia into a universal lament for the despised, cast-out artist. But before long he starts cutting up, violating the solemn unity of the self-portrait with nutty slapstick sketches in which he decks himself out like Groucho and makes fun of his own insularity. The movie turns into a lyrical comedy of self-transcendence: Godard's intellectual pratfalls finally break the ice that separates him from the rest of the world. In French.—T.R. (2/6/94) (Little Theatre, Public Theatre.)



Opening February 10, Sharon Stone in "The Quick and the Dead."

Legends of the Fall—Edward Zwick's film, based on Jim Harrison's brawny novella, is a father-and-sons saga, in which three handsome brothers (Brad Pitt, Aidan Quinn, Henry Thomas) compete for the approval of a stern patriarch (Anthony Hopkins). It gets sillier as it goes. Halfway through, Pa suffers a stroke, and Hopkins' performance turns into a mad music-hall impersonation of a peg-leg pirate. His outrageous scenery-chewing reveals the movie's true nature: it's the Monty Python version of "Bonanza." Also with Julia Ormond.—T.R. (1/9/95) (Village Theatre VII, 34th St. East, Beekman, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Lincoln Square.)

Little Women—Gillian Armstrong's movie is more naturalistic—less storybooklike—than the previous screen versions of Louisa May Alcott's novel about a poor but noble New England family in the eighteen-sixties. In this rendering, the Marches—mother, father (mostly absent), and four daughters—inhabit a coherent, fully realized world. Winona Ryder, as the aspiring writer Jo, gives a luminous performance. Also with Susan Sarandon, Trini Alvarado, Claire Danes, Kirsten Dunst, Samantha Mathis, Christian Bale, Gabriel Byrne, and Mary Wickes.—T.R. (1/9/95) (34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

The Madness of King George—Alan Bennett's stage play has moved to the screen, with the same star (Nigel Hawthorne), the same director (Nicholas Hytner), and the same story, about the King of England's decline, in the years 1788-89, from cheerful disciplinarian to lewd, unsleeping ranter. It's a fine dramatic predicament—and that's how it stays, never really pressing forward or pulling us into a plot. But there is plenty of relish here—in Ian Holm's fierce turn as a country physician, and in Hawthorne's blend of thunderings and whimpers.—A.L. (1/16/94) (Angelika Film Center, 19th Street East 6, Baronet, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

A Man of No Importance—Poignant whimsy about a sexually repressed gay bus conductor (Albert Finney) in early-sixties Dublin. He regales his passengers with the words of Oscar Wilde, stages "Salome" in a church hall, and eventually struts out of the closet in a Wildean getup, complete with green carnation. The writer, Barry Devlin, and the director, Suri Krishnamma, have conceived their hero as such a gentle, eccentric dreamer that Finney can't locate a core; he relies on tortuous expressions of elfish desperation.—M.S. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Martha & Ethel—The director, Jyll Johnstone, and her co-producer, Barbara Ettinger, have made a documentary about the two nannies who started working for their respective families in the fifties. (Quad Cinema and Lincoln Square.)

Miami Rhapsody—Gwyn (Sarah Jessica Parker) loves Matt (Gil Bellows)—only she's not sure. Her mom (Mia Farrow) loves a young male nurse (Antonio Banderas)—only she's not sure, either; maybe she really loves Gwyn's dad (Paul Mazursky). And so forth. David Frankel wrote and directed this comedy, which sounds like a lot of fun but somehow manages to be hardly any fun at all.—A.L. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Cinema I, and Lincoln Square.)

Murder in the First—In 1941, an inmate of Alcatraz, Henri Young (Kevin Bacon), is tried for killing a fellow-prisoner. It seems like a clean case until a pushy young lawyer (Christian Slater) argues that the real killer is Alcatraz itself, and in particular the prison's sadistic warden (Gary Oldman, as you would expect). Marc Rocco has a solid story to tell, and his movie splits neatly between a sweat-lashed opening and a solid courtroom follow-up. But he keeps beefing up his material with paranoid camera angles and nose-rubbing closeups—if you've ever had a weakness for overhead shots, this film will cure you. Rocco is the director turned defense attorney: his driving motive is to prove rather than to show, and his hammer blows (along with Bacon's and Oldman's) would wear you down fast if it weren't for Christian Slater. With severe spectacles, the actor looks like a younger version of Kevin Costner in "JFK," but he has a sly inquisitor's passion—a taste for milking witnesses until they run dry, for seeing the high comedy of it all—that Costner never dared to suggest. Playing the hero of an issues movie (and this one is dripping with issues) is usually a thankless task, but Slater gets better with every picture and carries this one with ease.—A.L. (Village East Cinemas, 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Nobody's Fool—Paul Newman plays Sully, a divorced, erratically employed construction

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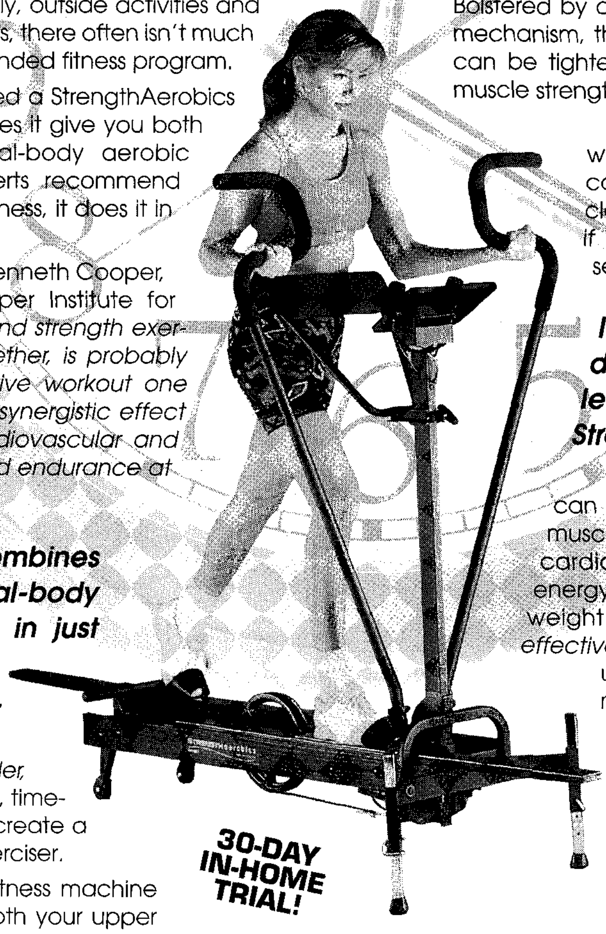

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CURRENT FILMS—Cont'd

worker in a dingy upstate New York town. Robert Benton's movie (based on a novel by Richard Russo) is essentially a series of low-key comic vignettes in which the hero tries to deal with the exasperating presence of other people: irritable neighbors, demanding friends, disappointed family members. Not much happens, but the picture bobs along amiably to the rhythm of Newman's dry, deeply funny performance, and the tiny pleasures accumulate like the snow that covers the town. The terrific supporting cast includes Bruce Willis, Melanie Griffith, Jessica Tandy, and Gene Saks.—T.R. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Tower East, Guild, Lincoln Square, and Metro Cinema.)

Pulp Fiction—In Quentin Tarantino's celebrated picture, John Travolta, Samuel L. Jackson, Uma Thurman, Tim Roth, Harvey Keitel, Christopher Walken, and Bruce Willis parade through two and a half hours of complicated, cross-weaving Los Angeles plots, some of which are more gripping than others; the talk is dirty and funny, the violence always waiting just around the corner. It's a bright and startling picture, but the next day, it seems like a dream: the film attacks your senses and gives you almost nothing to remember it by, let alone to nourish you.—A.L. (10/10/94) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

Queen Margot—Patrice Chereau's historical epic is often silly, but it never slows down long enough to make a real fool of itself. The place and period—Paris in 1572, when power was maintained by a combination of incest, poison, and blind faith—are unimprovable. Isabelle Adjani plays Margot, the suspiciously close sister of the King of France (Jean-Hugues Anglade), the daugher of Catherine de Medici (an iron-willed Virna Lisi), and the unwilling wife of Henri of Navarre (Daniel Auteuil). Chereau's love of flame against darkness is infectious, and his choreography of the massacre of the Protestants on St. Bartholomew's Day is vicious and rousing. It's good to see a costume picture that refuses to be well behaved. In French.—A.L. (Village East Cinemas and Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

Red—The last and best film in the trilogy that began with the baffling "Blue" and continued with the more acrid "White"; here all the skills of the director, Krzysztof Kieślowski, are brought into melancholy play. Blind chance or benign fate (according to your point of view) brings Valentine (Irène Jacob), a young model living alone in Geneva, into contact with a retired judge (Jean-Louis Trintignant) with a predilection for eavesdropping on telephone conversations. In time Valentine's repulsion shades into curiosity, and from there into affection. And the movie itself shades from coldness and contrivance into a story as touching and mysterious as anything Kieślowski has ever made. In French.—A.L. (11/28/94) (68th St. Playhouse, Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

The Secret of Roan Inish—A ten-year-old girl (Jeni Courtney) uncovers her family's history along Ireland's northwest coast, with help from her grandparents (Mick Lally and Eileen Colgan) and a creature that is half-seal, half-human (Susan Lynch). Written and directed by John Sayles. (Angelika Film Center, Eastside Cinema, and Lincoln Square.)

Strawberry and Chocolate—The Cuban director Tomás Gutiérrez Alea charts the efforts of Diego (Jorge Perugorria), a gay artist, to seduce David (Vladimir Cruz), a straight and, frankly, rather boring student. It's a daring movie to have come out of Cuba, although Gutiérrez Alea's grasp of the radical temperament may seem unsophisticated to audiences here. Diego kicks out against government restrictions, David lives quietly within them; wouldn't it have been more intriguing the other way around? Co-directed by Juan Carlos Tabio. In Spanish.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Tales from the Crypt: Demon Knight—All the sick gags, hot lights, and gore this side of hell can't recharge the antique and attenuated plot about an Everyman (William Sadler) warding off a Satanic emissary (Billy Zane). This time it's set in a motel that used to be a church, and it's peopled with such lowdown types as a whore (Brenda Bakke), her dumb john (Thomas Church), and an ex-con maid in a work-release program (Jada Pinkett). The demons look like poor relations of the Crypt Keeper, the series host. Zane seduces the humans with cheap dreams: the generic fantasies of generic characters. At least Sadler's gravelly intensity gives the horror a bit of traction. Ernest Dickerson directed.—M.S. (Manhattan Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, Olympia, and National Twin.)

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000).
Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171).
Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th (477-6600).
Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th (982-0400).
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th (924-3363).
Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th (529-6799).
19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th (260-8000).
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th (689-6548).
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th (532-5544).
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th (683-0255).
Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th (755-3020).
Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th (759-1411).
Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th (759-2262).
Plaza, 42 E. 58th (355-3320).
Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th (935-6420).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th (759-4630).
Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th (355-1663).
Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th (753-6022).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd (513-5408).
Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th (832-1670).
Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th (737-2622).
New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th (744-7339).
68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th (734-0302).
Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st (879-1313).
East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th (249-5100).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th (534-1880).
Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th (876-2400).
86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th (249-1144).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110).
Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd (929-8037).
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th (929-3350).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th (255-8800).
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd (513-5402).
23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd (989-0060).
Guild, 33 W. 50th (757-2406).
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th (765-7600).
57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th (581-7360).
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th (265-2520).
Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th (586-1900).
Paris, 4 W. 58th (980-5656).
Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th (752-5959).
Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st (247-5070).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd (265-7466).
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd (757-2280).
Regency, B'way at 67th (724-3700).
Lincoln Square, B'way at 68th (336-5000).
84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th (877-3600).
Thalia, B'way at 95th (316-4962).
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th (222-1200).
Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th (865-8128).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th (354-0900).
Embassy 1, B'way at 46th (302-0494).
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th (730-7262).
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way (869-8340).
National Twin, B'way at 44th (869-0950).

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

Car Wash (1976)—A junk-food mixture of poetry, black anger, bathroom humor, routines that have come through the sitcom mill, and worn-to-the-stump faggot jokes. The action is centered on one workday in an L.A. car wash that is white-owned but staffed mostly by blacks. The film's specialty is yanking laughs by having adult blacks do dirtier versions of the standard pranks that naughty kids used to do in comedies. Michael Schultz directed, from a script by Joel Schumacher; the editing (by Christopher Holmes) to the music (by Norman Whitfield) was probably a big factor in the film's box-office success.—P.K. (Whitney Museum; Feb. 11.)

Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill! (1965)—Killer-female mayhem. The antiheroines (including Lori Williams and Haji) are bosomy go-go dancers and sports-car freaks, led by Tura Satana, a greedy man-hater with a mean karate chop. Soon they're hauling around a male stiff and a female hostage, and plotting to rip off a sexually demented desert miser. A highlight of what Russ Meyer called his "drive-in period," this rabid Z movie stretches double-entendres into warped figure eights and offers some truly delicious bizarro strokes.—M.S. (Film Forum 3.)

Harvest (1937)—One of the true and essential French film classics. Jean Giono's novel—a love story set in an abandoned village that the lovers bring to life—was made in Provence by Marcel Pagnol. With a superb cast, including the young Fernandel as the itinerant tinker who sells his slavey mistress, Orane Démazis (the Fanny of the Pagnol trilogy), to the hunter, Gabriel Gabrio, and with Marguerite Moreno, Delmont, and Le Vigan. In French.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Feb. 11.)

Mamma Roma (1962)—In Pier Paolo Pasolini's over-conceptualized second film, Anna Magnani (who else?) plays Mamma Roma, a former prostitute with a heart as big, and goals as confused, as the whole Eternal City. Pasolini both admires and questions the woman's determination to push her teenage son into the middle class: she puts her street smarts at the service of false values. The director's Marxist-Catholic imagery reaches its heavy-handed nadir when, in prison, the son is strapped to the *letto di contenzione* ("punishment bed"). As photographed by the great Tonino Delli Colli, it makes for one fancy crucifixion. In Italian.—M.S. (Film Forum 3.)

A Man Escaped (1956)—In this country, escape is a theme for action movies, but the French director Robert Bresson is famous for his uncompromising methods, and having been a prisoner of the Nazis himself, he is not disposed to treat his material—André Devigny's account of his escape from the Montluc fortress prison—lightly. Bresson's hero's ascetic, single-minded dedication to escape is almost mystic, and the fortress constitutes a world as impersonal and as isolated as Kafka's. The movie was shot at Montluc with fanatic authenticity; the photography, by Léonce-Henry Burel, is austerely beautiful. François Leterrier, a Sorbonne philosophy student, is the lead. The music is Mozart's Mass in C Minor. All this makes it sound terribly pretentious, yet sometimes even the worst ideas can be made to work. It's a marvellous movie. In French.—P.K. (Anthology Film Archives; Feb. 10.)

The Navigator (1924)—Arguably, Buster Keaton's finest—but amongst the Keaton riches can one be sure? What isn't subject to debate is that this movie about a useless young millionaire (Keaton), who can't even shave himself, and his rich dizzy girlfriend (Kathryn McGuire) adrift on an enormous, deserted ocean liner without lights or steam is one of the greatest comedies ever made.

It was also his biggest box-office success. Keaton (and Donald Crisp) directed. According to Keaton, Crisp was to take care of the dramatic scenes but lost interest in them and "turned into a gagman. Well, that we didn't want, but we did manage to pull the picture through." Keaton pulled it through all right, while playing with the abstract possibilities of the film image the way a violin virtuoso uses his fiddle.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Feb. 10-13.)

The Sea Wolf (1941)—Edward G. Robinson is the Luciferian sea captain Wolf Larsen in this phantasmagoric turn-of-the-century adventure, based on Jack London's Nietzschean novel. London had a soft spot for supermen, but Robert Rossen's script strips Larsen of his Norse-god allure. The forties-liberal adaptation also changes Larsen's main antagonist from the castaway writer Humphrey Van Weyden (Alexander Knox) to a working-class hero, George Leach (John Garfield), and turns London's poet heroine into a fugitive jailbird (Ida Lupino). Luckily, the director, Michael Curtiz, puts over Rossen's glib ideas—and his good ones. Rossen's best idea is shifting the heroine's love interest from the sexless Humphrey to the red-blooded George, so Garfield and Lupino get the chance to conjure a passionate gloom.—M.S. (Museum of Modern Art; Feb. 9.)

Strictly Business (1991) —This "secret of my success" story attempts to win the Congeniality award in the young-black-filmmakers sweepstakes. It fails, because of the sour stereotypes in Pam Gibson and Nelson George's script and the bop-on-the-noggin direction by Kevin Hooks. The story is a simple matter of tit for tat: buppie Joseph C. Phillips helps street-hip Tommy Davidson rise out of the mail room at a high-stakes real-estate firm; in return, Davidson teaches him how to dress for sexual success with voluptuous bohemian Halle Berry, who'd otherwise be too fly for the slick executive. Phillips, the upwardly mobile black, is portrayed as an imitation-white zombie; Davidson, the homeboy, as a naïve slacker; and Berry, an aspiring night-club manager, as a piece of meat ("That ham is cooked, glazed, and ready to be sliced"). They're supposed to come together and fuse, but the result is more of a monster mash.—M.S. (Whitney Museum; Feb. 10.)

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)—"Junior" (Ivan Reitman). . . . "Mary Shelley's Frankenstein" (Kenneth Branagh). . . . "Oleanna" (David Mamet). . . . "The River Wild" (Curtis Hanson). . . . "Eat Drink Man Woman" (Ang Lee; in Mandarin). . . . "The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert" (Stephan Elliott).

Film Forum 2 and 3, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)—**Theatre 2:** Through Feb. 9: Films by Andy Warhol. Feb. 8 at 2: "Paul Swan" (1965), "Bufferin" (1966), and "Life of Juanita Castro" (1965). . . . Feb. 8 at 4:25 and 11: "The Loves of Ondine" (1968). . . . Feb. 8 at 6 and 8: "Nude Restaurant" (1968). . . . Feb. 9 at 2, 6:30, and 11: "Lonesome Cowboys" (1968). . . . Feb. 9 at 4 and 8:30: "Vinyl" (1965) and "Lupe" (1965). . . . ¶ From Feb. 10: The beginning of a five-week festival of Buster Keaton films, an early celebration of his hundredth birthday (the actual date is October 4). Feb. 10-13: "The Navigator" (†). . . . From Feb. 14: "Our Hospitality" (1923, Keaton and Jack Blystone). . . . **Theatre 3:** "Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!" (†) and "Mamma Roma" (†).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363)—A program of films starring Jackie Chan, all in Cantonese, with English and Chinese subtitles. Feb. 8 and 11: "Drunken Master II" (1994, Lau Ka Leung and Chan) and "Drunken Master" (1978, Yuen Woo Ping). . . . Feb. 9 and 13: "Project A II" (1987, Chan) and "Project A" (1983, Chan). . . . Feb. 10: "Dragons Forever" (1988, Samo Hung) and "Island on Fire" (1991, Chiu Yen Ping). . . . Feb. 12 and 14: "Operation Condor" (1991, Chan) and "Super Cop" (1992, Stanley Tong).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Two films in a series of seven in which Robert Rossen participated as writer, director, or producer. Feb. 9 at 2:30: "The Sea Wolf" (†). . . . Feb. 9 at 6: "Johnny O'Clock" (1947). . . . ¶ Feb. 9 at 3 and 6: "Fearless: The Hunterwali Story" (1993, Vincent Wadia), a documentary. . . . ¶ A retrospective of the works of the French writer, producer, and director Marcel Pagnol. Feb. 10 at 2:30 and Feb. 12 at 2: "Marius" (1931). . . . Feb. 10 at 6 and Feb. 12 at 5: "Fanny" (1932). . . . Feb. 10 at 8:30 and Feb. 13 at 6: "César" (1936). . . . Feb. 11 at 2: "Harvest" (†). . . . Feb. 11 at 5 and Feb. 13 at 2:30: "The Baker's Wife" (1938). . . . Feb. 14 at 2:30: "Cigalon" (1935). . . . ¶ A program of British television films by Alan Clarke. Feb. 10 at 3 and Feb. 12 at 2:30: "Road" (1987). . . . Feb. 12 at 5: "Christine" (1987) and "Elephant" (1989). . . . Feb. 13 at 3: "Contact" (1985). . . . ¶ Feb. 13 at 6:30: "Through and Through" (1991, Barbara Sternberg).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—A retrospective of films by the Brazilian filmmaker Nelson Pereira dos Santos. All the films are in Portuguese. Feb. 8 at 2, 6:15 and 8:15, and Feb. 10 at 2: "Gold Mouth" (1963). . . . Feb. 8 at 4: "Rio, Northern Zone" (1957). . . . Feb. 9 at 2, Feb. 10 at 4, and Feb. 12 at 7:30 and 9:30: "Hunger for Love" (1968) and "The Thief" (1982). . . . Feb. 14 at 2: "How Tasty Was My Little Frenchman" (1971) and "Christmas Mass" (1978). . . . Feb. 14 at 4:15: "The Alienist" (1970). . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 8 and Feb. 11-12 at 4:30: A tribute to Industrial Light & Magic.

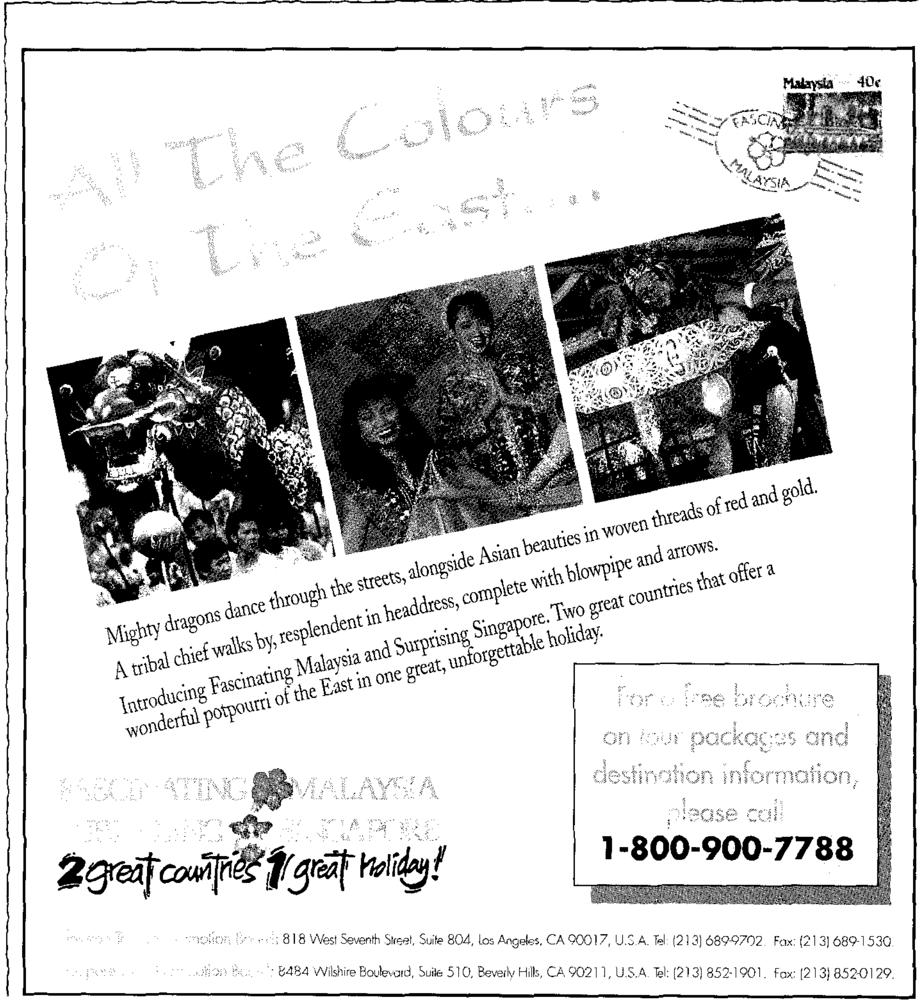
Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—A program of films and videos by, or about, black American males. Feb. 8 at noon: "Ashes and Embers" (1983, Haile Gerima). . . . Feb. 8 at 3:30: "Passing Through" (1977, Larry Clark). . . . Feb. 9 at 2: "True Identity" (1991, Charles Lane). . . . Feb. 9 at 4:30: "Hoop Dreams" (†). . . . Feb. 10 at noon: "Blue Collar" (1978, Paul Schrader). . . . Feb. 10 at 3:30: "Strictly Business" (†). . . . Feb. 11 at noon: "My Brother's Wedding" (1983, Charles Burnett). . . . Feb. 11 at 3:30: "Car Wash" (†). . . . Feb. 12 at noon: "Chameleon Street" (1990, Wendell B. Harris, Jr.). . . . Feb. 12 at 3:30: "Ricochet" (1991, Russell Mulcahy).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—The films of Dario Argento. Feb. 11 at 2: "Four Flies on Grey Velvet" (1972). . . . Feb. 11 at 4: "Suspiria" (1977). . . . Feb. 12 at 2: "The Cat O'Nine Tails" (1971). . . . Feb. 12 at 4: "Two Evil Eyes" (1990, Argento and George Romero).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Feb. 12 at 7, the feature will be Tennessee Williams' "Suddenly, Last Summer" (1959, Joseph L. Mankiewicz; adapted by Gore Vidal), with Elizabeth Taylor, Montgomery Clift, and Katharine Hepburn.

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Feb. 14 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Café au Lait" (1993, Mathieu Kassovitz; in French).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—Films by Robert Bresson, all in French. Feb. 10 at 8: "A Man Escaped" (†). . . . Feb. 11 at 5: "Pickpocket" (1959). . . . Feb. 11 at 9: "Mouchette" (1966). . . . Feb. 12 at 6: "Au Hasard, Balthazar" (1966). . . . Feb. 12 at 8: "Les Dames du Bois de Boulogne" (1944). . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 7: "23rd Psalm Branch" (1966, Stan Brakhage).



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THE NEW YORKER

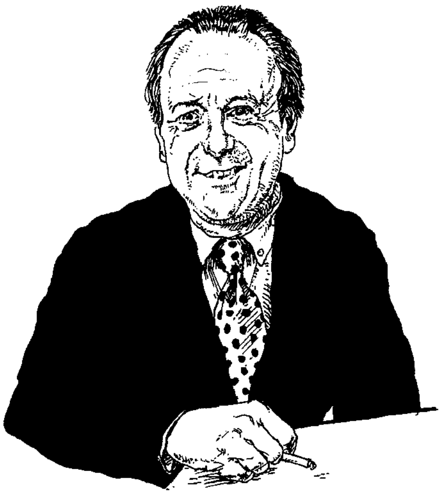
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

THE FINAL DAYS OF "MAD DOG"

WHILE Jeffrey P. Beck was alive, he dreamed of a movie version of his life. Obviously, he couldn't have foreseen the end—he was stricken by a heart attack last week, at the age of forty-eight, after jogging in Central Park—but, given his penchant for self-dramatization, one can easily imagine the funeral scene he would have choreographed. It would have included people like Henry Kravis, for whom he'd helped orchestrate the RJR Nabisco deal; Oliver Stone, whom he'd advised on the making of "Wall Street"; and perhaps even Boris Yeltsin, a symbol of his most recent forays into deal-making, in Russia.

In real life, Beck's memorial service took place at the distinctly non-cinematographic Plaza Memorial Chapel, on Amsterdam Avenue. Nobody famous showed up, not even his best-known colleagues at the now defunct Drexel Burnham Lambert—colleagues like Michael Milken and Leon Black. The small chapel was only half full, and many of the mourners seemed to be recent friends, people who knew Beck's fourth wife, Anna. Mrs. Beck, a slender young immigrant from the former Soviet Union, spoke movingly and tearfully, not of a brash deal-maker but of a man motivated by love and generosity. She managed to banish a past that Beck himself had never seemed able to put behind him.

Jeff Beck in his heyday as an investment banker became a symbol of many of the excesses and illusions of the so-called greed decade. "Flamboyant" was the word invariably used in reference to him—"Lock and load!" he'd cry before the onset of a deal. Stories about Beck proliferated: How he led patrols during the Vietnam War and got the nickname Mad Dog, resurrected on Wall Street because of his penchant for howling after a deal. How he ate a box of dog biscuits to make an impression on the head of RJR Nabisco. How he threatened to leap from his office window if he was cut out of a lucrative mergers-and-acquisitions fee. Who knew if these things were true? Beck always came off as hearty, aggressively friendly, irreverent, and not to be trusted, but it was difficult to imagine what business expertise he brought to the big M. & A.s in which he was a featured player. In a world populated by the likes of the transparently phony Dennis Levine and Ivan Boesky, he *was* a breath of fresh air.



JEFF BECK might have remained a footnote to Wall Street history except for a 1990 *Wall Street Journal* piece by Bryan Burrough which shattered his reputation by revealing that much of the Beck legend—including the claim that he had served in Vietnam, an alleged stint with the C.I.A., and a story that he stood to inherit a fortune from the Beck's beer business—was a fabrication. That news alone would hardly have earned him national coverage, but because it came hard on the heels of the collapse of the junk-bond market and the savings-and-loan fiasco it turned Beck into the very embodiment of all that was wrong with the financial world in the eighties. How could someone like Beck keep moving up in the ranks of one investment firm after another? How could he pull down a two-and-a-half-million-dollar bonus at Drexel, as he did in his last year? As with far more serious transgressions, Beck's superiors closed their eyes. Clients liked Beck. He brought in money. His stories were entertaining, and they reinforced everyone's self-importance by transforming the often dull world of M. & A.s into the moral equivalent of war.

Beck never got over the *Journal* piece; and a subsequent biography, "Rainmaker," by Anthony Bianco, while far more sympathetic, only solidified his infamy. He all but dropped out of sight, began exercising compulsively, even while continuing to chain-smoke, and sank into a deep depression. It all makes the heart attack seem inevitable.

At the memorial service, Bianco said that he had remained close to Beck in recent years. He said that Beck had suffered from a "corrosive anger" until the day he died, never understanding why he, of the thousands of investment bankers of that era, had been singled out as a symbol. G. Chris Andersen, a former Drexel colleague, delivered a eulogy in which he said that in the last few years Beck had been a changed man. In his new work in Russia, and, especially, with his new wife, Beck seemed to have found a degree of happiness and self-acceptance that had previously eluded him.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JARRETT HUDDLESTON

Yet the Beck whom Andersen described didn't seem to have changed much. Andersen said that he'd been working on a recent deal with Beck that had Beck shaking his head over the dull young M.B.A.s on Wall Street today. According to Andersen, Beck exclaimed, "They have no moves! They don't know how to make things happen! They don't know how to infect other people's minds!" Beck paused, he said, and then added, "It's not any fun."

MARY, MARY, SLIGHTLY CONTRARY

In the living room of Mary Tyler Moore's Upper East Side apartment—along with the Diebenkorn, the Matisse, the sixteenth-century English wood carving, and the pre-Columbian stone sculpture bearing coffee-table candy in its palm—there is a David Hockney canvas called "I Will Love You Next Wednesday at 8 P.M." Its title, according to the man who sold it to Moore, was inspired by a declaration of undying love that Hockney received from his lover. "Yes, yes," Hockney replied, "but will you love me next Wednesday at 8 P.M.?" The question struck Moore as a very apt line for a veteran sitcom actress. "I was appearing in a TV show at the time which was doing badly. The moment I saw it, I thought, That's for me!"

Happily, on most of the Wednesday nights of her career Moore has proved fairly lovable. This week, a group of her peers, including Ed Asner, Betty White, and Alan Alda, will be gathering at the Museum of Television and Radio for a gala dinner to honor "the singular independence and optimistic all-American persona" that "helped to revolutionize the image of women on television." If this doesn't really convey the charm that Moore brought to her roles as Laura Petrie on "The Dick Van Dyke Show" and Mary Richards on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show"—the pop eyes and O-shaped mouth of her comic outrage, the tentative bursts of giggle that built to her lusty cackle, the splendid hairdo, curling up in two great, springy commas on either side of her head—it does suggest something of her preternatural perkiness. "People always wanted to marry me, but they wanted to have a *romp* with someone like Raquel Welch," Moore says. "I was never very viable as a sex figure." These days, however, she believes that her years spent being the avatar of American niceness were mostly a sham. "Up until twelve years ago, I'd never really been nice inside. I *appeared* to be nice, but there wasn't any *core* of niceness."

The deficiency has since been corrected with a spell at the Betty Ford Center, copious therapy, and marriage, in 1983, to Robert Levine, a New York cardiologist, who is sixteen years her junior. They met when Dr. Levine was looking after Moore's mother at Mount Sinai. Late one night, after several Grand Marniers, Moore rang his emergency number and asked, "Does extreme loneliness come under the heading of emergency?" Dr. Levine thought it did.

Now, at fifty-seven, Moore sports a strawberry-blond feather cut and a figure so ruthlessly exercised she could be mistaken on a dark night for a hat pin. This winter she has parts in two films—"Keys to Tulsa," directed by Leslie Greif, and "Flirting with Disaster," directed by David O. Russell—and hopes that these will lead to further "feature activity." In the meantime, she is busy writing her autobiography and trying to catch up on last year's movies in order to cast her votes as a member of the Academy. (So far, "Forrest Gump" gets the Moore thumbs-up, and "Pulp Fiction" gets a raspberry: "It very much disturbed me. I felt the same way after reading Truman Capote's 'In Cold Blood.' ")

She enjoys life in New York for the most part, but it is comforting to know that even huggable Ms. Moore has her bad days in the city. "Three months ago, I was walking down Madison Avenue and there was a homeless woman sitting on the sidewalk asking for money," she recalls. "I had no money—I had just come from exercise class—and when she shook her cup at me I looked straight ahead and continued to walk. So she looked at me and she said, 'Oh! Don't even say hello, *Mary Tyler Moore!* Thanks a lot! Well, *Mary Tyler Moore* is a *slut!* A slut! Mary Tyler Moore is a slut! You slut, Mary Tyler Moore!' "

BROTHERS AND SISTER

Sister Souljah was in town recently to get serious about black men and black women. The rapper, Clinton antagonist, and author of the new book "No Disrespect" was prodding an eloquent group of African-American actors and pop stars to speak the truth, "even though the truth sometimes makes us uncomfortable."

Souljah: What is the definition of a man? A real man, a powerful man, a balanced man?

Dondre Whitfield (actor, "All My Children"): I thought I was being a man by leaving "All My Children." They didn't want to give in to the issues that we have to deal with on a day-to-day basis. When I brought it up, I guess I was like the Marcus Garvey of ABC daytime.

Malik Yoba (actor, "New York Undercover"): The kids in the community used to call my father the Ayatollah. I grew up Muslim. He used to say we had our noble and our base nature. He'd say, "When you eat at a fancy restaurant, the food looks pretty noble, but when it comes out the other end it's pretty base. What type of life do you want to live?"

The discussion continues.

•

NAKED TRUTHS

Terrence McNally's play "Love! Valour! Compassion!" ran for twelve weeks at the Manhattan Theatre Club. On February 14th, after twenty-eight previews, it opens at the Walter Kerr, on Broadway. So far, every preview performance has been sold out. The play received the highest praise from the critics, but an informal survey of theatregoers drew attention to some things the critics failed to mention.

Straight Woman, Upper East Side: The play is truly sad, but that's not the only thing about it that you remember. The main thing is this young actor who is lying in the sun on his back during a lot of the second act. He's wearing only dark glasses and silver hoop earrings. He's young. Young is the *point.* I was sitting in the first row, and this actor—his character is called Ramon, or sometimes Chiquita—has his knees bent and his legs are pretty much apart. I kept straining my neck to look around and see if any other people were staring at him, and it seemed, oddly, that they weren't. Then this Ramon character stood up for a few seconds and faced the audience. Now you could see all of his penis, which was extraordinarily long, and everything behind it was huge. It was.

Gay Man, Chelsea: Here I am, and I've been to every sex club, and I've seen people beat one another with whips, and I was still shocked. I still took a step back. But I think maybe that's because he does have such a huge cock. It was *huge*. You have to say, "Was that how he got the part?" It *is* huge. Absolutely. And I've seen quite a few.

Straight Man, Hell's Kitchen: If one goes by the Greek norm—Greek statues are far from well hung—it was a disproportionately long penis. Nowadays, the sexual confusion is such that exaggerated differences come to be valued aesthetically in a way that would have been thought preposterous by the people who founded the Western aesthetic.

Straight Woman, Bel Air, California: Well, I never used to really look-look-look, you know? I kind of do now. I still haven't really looked in the light. The other night, the man I live with was taking a pink Vitabath, and that's the closest I've got to examining and looking. So in New York, at that play, I just sat there with my mouth wide open, and I was mesmerized by it.

Gay Man, Greenwich Village: During the show I was very aware of my head movements, of my head moving back and forth because my eyes were following a naked actor on the stage. Well, I sort of did look around to see if anyone would notice what *I* was doing.

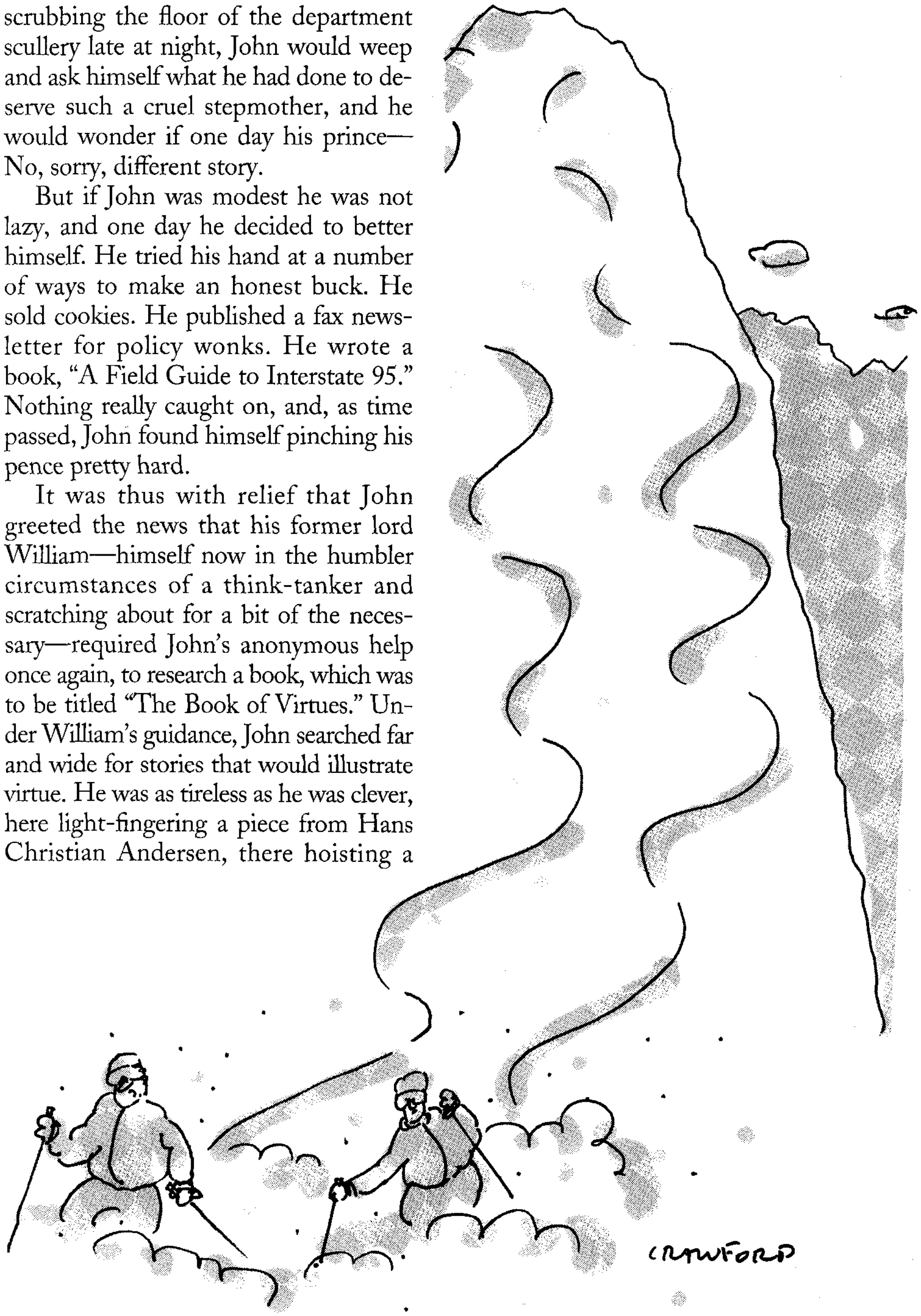
THE BOOK ON MR. BENNETT'S VIRTUE

One of the more unlikely recent publishing events was the huge success of "The Book of Virtues," an anthology of morally uplifting tales packaged by the bureaucrat turned sermonizer William Bennett. In the spirit of Mr. Bennett's best-seller, it is gratifying and edifying to report, from Washington, another fable for our times—the story of how John Cribb became a millionaire.

Once upon a time, inside the beltway of the capital city of a great nation, there was a young man named John, who served without complaint in the humble position of speechwriter. Day after day, John toiled for his lord, William, the Secretary of Education, scribbling the golden words that he would proclaim before the cameras and the courtiers of the media. Sometimes, scrubbing the floor of the department scullery late at night, John would weep and ask himself what he had done to deserve such a cruel stepmother, and he would wonder if one day his prince—No, sorry, different story.

But if John was modest he was not lazy, and one day he decided to better himself. He tried his hand at a number of ways to make an honest buck. He sold cookies. He published a fax newsletter for policy wonks. He wrote a book, "A Field Guide to Interstate 95." Nothing really caught on, and, as time passed, John found himself pinching his pence pretty hard.

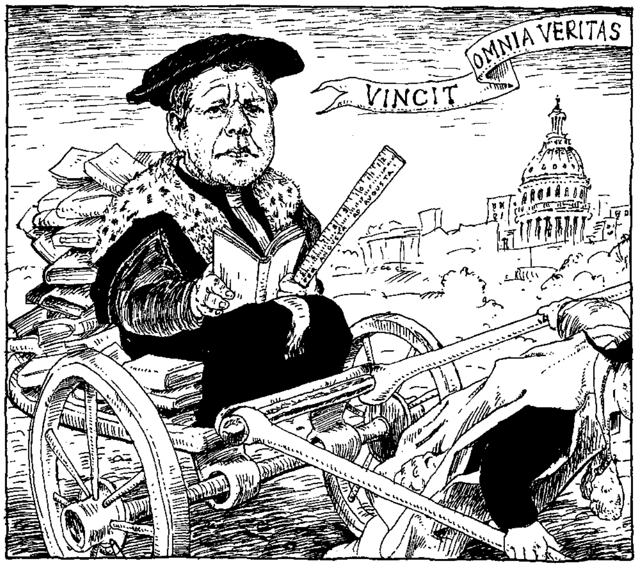
It was thus with relief that John greeted the news that his former lord William—himself now in the humbler circumstances of a think-tanker and scratching about for a bit of the necessary—required John's anonymous help once again, to research a book, which was to be titled "The Book of Virtues." Under William's guidance, John searched far and wide for stories that would illustrate virtue. He was as tireless as he was clever, here light-fingering a piece from Hans Christian Andersen, there hoisting a choice bit from the Bible. But the work took more time than either John or William had expected, and the two weeks they had agreed on sped by long before the job was done. John wanted to go on, but he naturally wanted to get paid, too. This presented William with a dilemma. Not to put too fine a point on it, he was suffering from a small cash-flow embarrassment: he had long ago spent the advance on his two-book deal with Simon & Schuster. Being a great man, though, William had an idea: if John would stick



"Was that my pager or yours?"

with the project for a year, William would give John about a third of any profits that the resulting "Book of Virtues" earned. Not surprisingly, John leaped. "Bill is a generous and fair guy," he said.

Verily. "The Book of Virtues" is currently in its thirty-fourth printing. "We were in a state of shock," John recalls of the first time the book hit No. 1 on the *Times* best-seller list. But the noble (indeed, the downright virtuous) William kept his promise. At thirty dollars per book, and if Bennett is receiving in royalties the fifteen per cent that is standard in publishing, John's piece of the action would appear to have netted the once unassuming ghost-scribe well over two million dollars. John will not discuss that figure, but neither will he deny it. William says, "Let's just say we're both happy about this. I'm happy and John's happy. John's *really* happy."



William and John are at work on a sequel—"The Son of Virtue," it has been informally dubbed—and John is said to be getting the same princely deal.

Moral: Virtue is its own reward, especially when you figure in foreign-language royalties and subsidiary rights.

SEEN AROUND TOWN

With forties retro on its way out and "glamour" beginning to lose its sheen, the fashion industry has taken up two new emotional trends, which could be detected in the speeches, salutations, and gossip traded among industry insiders during last week's Council of Fashion Designers of America awards ceremony, at Lincoln Center. The new emotions are Honesty and Sincerity. Roseanne appeared on video looking as luscious and pink as a marzipan pig, and spoke of her "furious but futile search for self-esteem" in, among other things, the world of fashion. The German model Nadja let the world know that "without giving good make-ups, all the girls would not be looking as goods as they looks in the magazine."

Perhaps the industry's current move toward Honesty and Sincerity, which has yet to be designated a full-blown fad, is in response to the fact that few of the spring collections have a noticeable theme. In a business notoriously suspicious of ideas that cannot be expressed in a buzzword or two, fashion may have to revert to its "anti-fashion" position, which was referred to at last year's C.F.D.A. as the Real.

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One might expect a fiftieth birthday to be a gruelling passage for an enfant terrible, especially when the enfant terrible in question is the conceptual artist Joseph Kosuth. A striking figure, with his blond hair, (invariably) black shirt, and take-no-prisoners style of argument, Kosuth made himself less than wildly popular with the New York art world at the end of the nineteen-sixties by declaring that painting was dead. Well, Kosuth, no longer blond, survived the end of his youth with aplomb. There were black tablecloths and bowls of paper-whites at the dinner that he and his wife gave at their loft on Broadway and Houston, for something like a hundred members of *la haute Bohème*, who ate by the mingled light of candles, electric lamps, and the pale, unblinking glow of a characteristic Kosuth art work: the command "SELF-DESCRIBE SELF-DEFINE," executed in neon tubing, mounted on the wall.

Afterward, Kosuth was splendidly roasted by the writer (and Barneys copywriter) Glenn O'Brien, and then John Cale sat down at the piano and David Byrne picked up a guitar. This was quite something, because Cale—who began with Andy Warhol's Velvet Underground—and Byrne are both strongly individualistic talents, but they meshed just fine. Then somebody suggested that the duo play a classic Talking Heads number, "Artists Only," with the line "I'm painting, I'm painting again." "I don't think Joseph would like that," the artist Donald Baechler murmured.

It was an interesting point. There were plenty of artists at the dinner, but they were all Conceptualists—Baechler was one of the few there who have applied brush to canvas—and the Talking Heads song dated from the end of the nineteen-seventies, when resurgent painters were wiping the Conceptualists off the map. But Kosuth roared with laughter at the suggestion. He is still of the opinion that painting is dying—it's just taking much, much longer than he imagined.

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Mildred Stern Hilson, one of those New Yorkers little known except to the well known, was eulogized the other day at Temple Emanu-El by her mainly rich and often famous friends. Barbara Bush recalled meeting her for the first time in the elevator of the Waldorf Towers, after moving there in 1971 with her husband. "There stood the most elegant lady with the straightest back, fairest skin, whitest hair, and in the most stylish suit. She introduced herself and said that she was entertaining the Duke and Duchess of Windsor for dinner in May and would like us to attend. That was in January." On other occasions, Mrs. Hilson dined with Presidents Eisenhower and Nixon, and with ambassadors, potentates, and tycoons too numerous to mention.

All this for a widow whose investment-banker husband died in 1952. Mrs. Hilson was a relentless fund-raiser, for the Republican Party and for numerous charities, but when friends were asked what it was about her that compelled social obeisance, they said that she understood the secret of attracting the powerful: not to be impressed by them. ♦

This week's contributors: James Stewart, Zoe Heller, Alison Rose, Susan Mercandetti and Michael Kelly, Hilton Als, Anthony Haden-Guest, David Brown.

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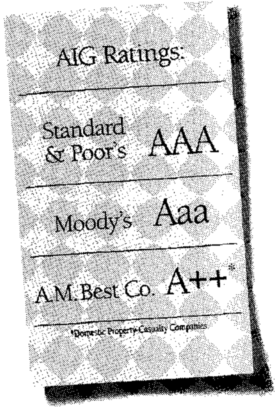

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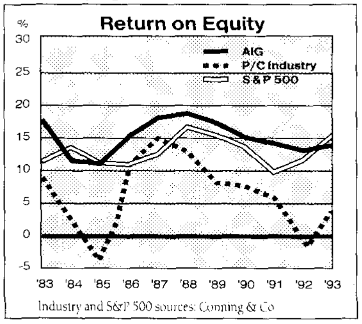

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ANNALS OF COMMUNICATIONS

SELLING THE AIR

Who will control the airwaves? This year may see a decision, and the battle is on between the new Congress and the F.C.C.—and its chairman, Reed Hundt.

BY KEN AULETTA

To decision-makers in the communications business, government—not titans like Bill Gates and Rupert Murdoch—is the true powerhouse. Not since the Communications Act of 1934, which authorized the federal government to license radio and television stations to use the public airwaves, has the government become entangled in so many momentous communications issues. Reed Hundt, the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, which was established by the 1934 act, says that 1995 "may be the most important year in the history" of American telecommunications.

Every industry tells Congress that it favors rigorous competition. Not for a moment does Hundt believe it.

There are at least three good reasons for believing that this is true. First, there is the F.C.C. auction of wireless-spectrum licenses, which began on December 5th last year, and includes everything from cellular phones, through pagers, to hand-held wireless computers that will fax and phone and send E-mail. The many rounds of bidding—which initially were to conclude at the end of January—will perhaps stretch into the spring. "The auction is a metaphor for everything we're doing," Hundt said on the day the auction started. The auction will generate tax revenues, but the more wireless companies bid to win licenses, the more they must charge customers to recoup their investment.

The second momentous event will be telecommunications legislation that, if it is passed, could unshackle everyone in the business, freeing broadcasters of restrictions and inviting telephone companies into the video business, say, and cable companies into the telephone business; long-distance telephone companies into local service, and local companies into long-distance service; electric companies into telephone and video services. Such deregulation is not a simple matter. A long-distance telephone company, for example, could not hook up local customers without access to the wiring system of a local or regional phone company, without agreement on the cost of such a connection, and without provision for a government appeals process to adjudicate disputes.

The third—and least noticed—event this year will be the F.C.C.'s issuing of guidelines for what is variably called advanced television (ATV), digital television (DTV), and high-definition television (HDTV). With the arrival of broadcasting equipment that transmits TV signals the way computers do and of technology that allows over-the-air signals to be compressed into a smaller megahertz space than they now occupy, six or possibly even seven new channels will exist for every channel that currently exists. Technology has offered new choices, but government must now decide among them. Do existing stations get the new channels, or do the channels go to new broadcast bidders?

In Washington, rhetoric and reality often conflict. Publicly, every industry tells Congress that it favors rigorous competition—two or more arteries going into every home. Not for a moment does Hundt believe it. Despite promises from the telephone companies to jump into the cable business, and from the cable

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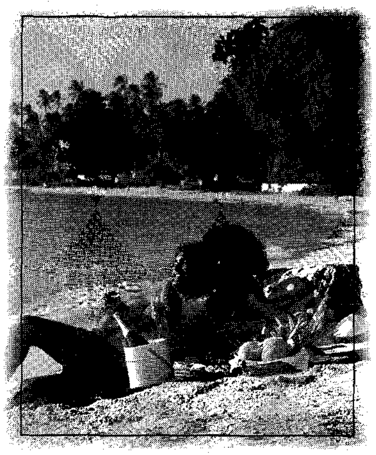

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companies to jump into the telephone business, he said, "all the industry plans added together—and approved by us, if they are—really mean that two years from now the maximum number of households with more than one wire will be only eight per cent."

Privately, every sector of the communications industry deluges the F.C.C. with petitions to keep competitors at bay. Michael Katz, the F.C.C.'s irreverent chief economist, observes, "TV broadcasters say, 'We want free markets, but we don't believe that the government should use markets to sell us spectrum.' TV broadcasters have their own definition of a free market—'Give it to us free and we'll market it.' Radio broadcasters say they favor free markets, but they ask the commission to block competition from entrepreneurs who want to use satellites to deliver radio services. The local telephone companies say, 'Get out of our way and let us into the video-dial-tone business.' Then you say to them, 'How about letting the electrical utilities into telecommunications?' They say, 'Don't let them in!' The cable companies say, 'Don't let either of them in; they'll use their captive-monopoly rate bases to compete unfairly.' Yet they want no pricing regulations for themselves. The long-distance telephone companies say we should let them into the local telephone business, but they don't want the local companies in the long-distance business. So all industries say, 'Get out of our way—but regulate our rivals.' "

The only way to end the standoff and see the battle joined, Hundt said, is, first, for government to eliminate the legal impediments to competition, and, second, for it to create "a third force"—a force like an F.C.C. auction of spectrum space. Yet Hundt knows that to create a third force Washington must be able to overcome a deep ideological division.

THE ideological division was on display at the Postal Square Building, in downtown Washington, in December, when several hundred government officials and representatives of wireless companies appeared for the opening of the spectrum auction. Representatives of twenty-nine F.C.C.-approved bidders—mostly alliances of cable and telecommunications companies—were also present. In person, or by computer or telephone, they would soon begin entering and amending their bids on ninety-nine spectrum licenses in fifty-one markets across the country. They listened to Vice-President Al Gore praise the auction and propose that, if the auction generated more than the ten to twelve billion dollars that the government was already counting on to help reduce the federal deficit, the additional money could be used to help transform American society by subsidizing a wire to link "every single classroom in the United States of America to the information superhighway."

Reed Hundt heartily applauded Gore's proposal. Edward Markey, Democrat of Massachusetts, then the outgoing chairman of the House Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Finance—who had suggested during the ceremony that funds from the auction could be used to subsidize public broadcasting as well—also rose to applaud. But, while Gore was speaking, Senator Larry Pressler, of South Dakota, who as a result of the Republican election victories last November is now the chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, did not join the approving chorus; he kept his eyes fixed on the floor, yawned occasionally, and applauded tepidly. In his own remarks, Pressler stressed the idea that such spectrum auctions had been proposed by Republicans, and added that, in his view, "the Washington regulatory bureaucracy" remained the enemy of true reform. But communications policy, he implied, was no longer to be handled as a family affair between old school friends like Gore and Hundt (they had been classmates at St. Albans School, in Washington) and between a Democratic Administration and Democratic congressional chairmen. No longer was there to be an unspoken agreement on shared assumptions, such as the assumption that government should actively referee market forces.

Listening to Pressler's remarks and spending a week as a visitor to Hundt's office suggested to me how dramatically the political landscape has shifted since November. Within hours of the auction's start, Hundt and his staff were working the telephones to placate Republicans. On December 6th, at a daily morning staff meeting at F.C.C. headquarters, the commission's chief of staff, Blair Levin, drew up a list of phone calls that Hundt should make to business leaders urging support for Gore's proposal. Levin told Ruth Dancey, Hundt's executive assistant, that Hundt should also call Senator Pressler and Representative Jack Fields, of Texas, the Republican who was to replace Markey as chairman of the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Finance. Levin had learned that Pressler was angry that he had not been told of Gore's proposal to wire classrooms before it was made.

Hundt arrived at his office that morning at nine, looking as if he had got up late, dressed hastily, and forgotten to comb his wavy black hair and cinch up the knot of his tie. He conferred with Levin, took a seat at his desk, and dialled Representative Fields. Fields was not in, so Hundt asked for Michael Regan, the House Commerce Committee's counsel, whom he knew as a fellow St. Albans alumnus. Fields had been invited to sit on the stage during Gore's speech, but other business had kept him away, so Hundt started the conversation with Regan by recapping Gore's proposal. They needed to be able to speak frankly, Hundt said. "None of us should look to have this issue be the defining difference between Democrats and Republicans," he went on, and added that Gore wanted bipartisan coöperation for his proposal.

Hundt was preoccupied with the Republicans. He realized that after the election sweep in November they had an appetite for battle with the Democrats, but he nonetheless hoped that telecommunications policy would be amenable to a truce. The 1994 Congress, in a bipartisan effort, had come close to passing legislation that would have lifted certain federal regulations in order to increase competition among the industries with communications access to the home—local and long-distance telephone companies, cable, computers, wireless, direct-broadcast satellites, broadcasters, and the electric utilities. Hundt's hopes for a bipartisan approach this year suffered a setback on January 9th, however, when Republicans who spoke during hearings that Pressler was conducting to shape new telecommunications legislation suggested, as Pressler had in December, that government—and, by implication, Reed Hundt—was the enemy. The Senate Majority Leader, Robert Dole, disparaged the Democrats as too timid. "The marketplace, not government, should pick the winners and losers," he said. Senator Conrad Burns, of Montana, asserted that Republicans were for "equality of opportunity, not equality of results." Those sentiments were expressions not of policy but of frustration. By contrast, a twenty-page draft blueprint of principles for new telecommunications legislation, which Senator Pressler has circulated among Republican members of his committee, requires that government guarantee "universal service" for telecommunications which is "affordable" and whose rates are "comparable" in rural and urban areas, and insists that "rural and high-cost areas should have access to advanced health care, education, and economic development."

Some of the language in Pressler's draft could have been written by an activist Democrat. Still, there are serious issues dividing the parties. "The whole burden of proof has shifted," Martin D. Franks, CBS's chief Washington lobbyist, said recently about the new political lineup in Washington. "Larry Pressler and Jack Fields are saying, 'Tell me why regulations should stay.' " While Democrats and Republicans do agree on many things, there remains the basic philosophical divide between government as spectator and government as referee.

REED HUNDT himself is a believer in government. The G.I. Bill of Rights paid for his father's law-school education, at the University of Michigan. Hundt recalls that his parents were "solidly liberal," and they voted for Norman Thomas in the 1948 Presidential election. His father was a lawyer and, later, an administrative-law judge. The family lived in Falls Church, Virginia, and moved to Washington when Reed was thirteen. They struggled to pay his tuition so that he could go to St. Albans, where he met Al Gore.

Hundt graduated from St. Albans in 1965, and in the fall of that year he entered Yale. He became the executive editor of the *Yale Daily News* and was the first to publish the cartoons of Garry Trudeau. After graduating, he taught school for two years. Then he enrolled at the Yale Law School, where he became friends with his fellow-student Bill Clinton. Of his selection as F.C.C. chairman, in 1993, Hundt joked, "I owe this job to lots of hard work and to fortunate seat assignments in high school and law school."

In 1975, Hundt joined the Los Angeles office of Latham & Watkins, where he had an eclectic practice, devoted mostly to representing business in antitrust cases. In late 1979, he moved to the Washington office of the firm and there helped build a communications practice, becoming a partner in 1983. Hundt did pro-bono work, taking on civil-rights cases for the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense and Educational Fund, and representing poor death-row inmates. "He's a child of the sixties," his wife, Dr. Elizabeth Katz Hundt, who is a psychologist, observed recently. She said she had always known that the law did not satisfy "his wish to contribute and to give back in a larger sense to society"—a wish that was "imparted to all of us by John Kennedy."

In 1992, Hundt served as an economic adviser for his two former schoolmates, Clinton and Gore. When Clinton's original choice to head the F.C.C. declined, Gore proposed Hundt. He was nominated on June 29, 1993, confirmed by the Senate on November 19th, and sworn in by Gore as the twenty-fifth F.C.C. chairman on November 29th.

As chairman, Hundt is one part traditional Democrat and one part new Democrat. At first, the industries that came before the F.C.C. heard only the voice of traditional liberalism—of government as activist. Soon after Hundt was sworn in, he stirred up broadcasters and cable programmers by criticizing TV violence, warning that if television did not police itself government might do the policing. He also pledged that the F.C.C. would aggressively penalize broadcast stations and cable systems that did not follow the commission's equal-opportunity rules for minorities and women. Unlike his Republican predecessors at the F.C.C., he emphasized industry's public-trust obligations—to teach children, to provide news. In February of 1994, after a congressional clamor over rising cable rates, Hundt and the commission voted to roll back the rates by seven per cent, on top of a cut of as much as ten per cent the year before—a move that prompted cheers from consumer groups and invective from industry.

What Hundt didn't see at first—until last November, at least, when the F.C.C. voted to relax some cable rules—was that the goals of the commission and Congress were in conflict with one another. Both wanted to offer consumers relief from onerous cable fees, yet at the same time they expected the cable companies to invest in creating more channels and programming, although they would have less cash with which to do so. The F.C.C. wanted to decrease the concentration of ownership in the cable industry and assure more cable channels for newcomers, but smaller cable companies, since their cash was reduced, couldn't borrow capital and were bought out by the giants. J. Bruce Llewellyn, who headed a group of minority investors with a twenty-per-cent interest in Garden State Cablevision, a small cable company, and who in January sold his stake in the company to Comcast and another partner, said, "The small guys can't take a cut in cash flow. So the small guys are selling out and the big cable systems are getting bigger."

"Everybody talks competition and liberalization, but the reality is different," says Eli Noam, the director of the Institute for Tele-Information, at Columbia University, and a former member of the New York State Public Service Commission, who was an early supporter of Hundt but has been disappointed in Hundt's F.C.C. "The question is not people's commitment to principle but what they actually do," Noam says. "When it comes to what they do, I don't see much deregulation that the F.C.C. has accomplished." He notes that the original 1934 Communications Act was only forty-six pages long, whereas the proposed 1994 telecommunications bill, an amendment to the 1934 act, was some two hundred pages long. Noam believes that the length of the 1994 bill had less to do with actual need than with congressional habit—"the approach of trying to forestall any conceivable negative effect, instead of waiting for bad things to happen and then dealing with them."

Of course, competition without rules can become anarchy, like a football game played without a referee. "Without technical rules to govern the radio spectrum"—for mobile phones and beepers and broadcast stations—"you'd have interference," the chief of the F.C.C.'s Office of Plans and Policy, Robert Pepper, told me. Could a wireless-telephone user from Chicago use her portable phone in Washington if wireless systems were not compelled to allow interoperability? If there had been no 1992 Cable

Act, with its provision for "fair access to programming," cable would not have allowed its programs to be sold to a vibrant new delivery system—direct-broadcast satellites. Moreover, without government-required subsidies remote rural and suburban homes would not have relatively inexpensive telephone service, and the Internet would not have sprouted, either.

BOTH the inevitability and the clumsiness of the F.C.C.'s role in overseeing communications policy were apparent during a meeting that Time Warner executives had with Reed Hundt on December 8th. The meeting concerned a proposal from Liberty Cable, in Manhattan. Liberty (backed by local telephone companies) wanted the right to provide cable service to individual apartments by using cable that competitors—principally Time Warner—had already installed. F.C.C. rules, which were written with single-family houses in mind, stipulate that any competitor wanting to tap into a household's wiring system can do so only "at or about twelve inches" outside the home, because the junction box that connects such a house to the main feeder line is usually located a foot from the building. Liberty had appeared before Hundt a week earlier to propose that the F.C.C. amend this rule so that it could tap into an apartment building's cable wire, which is often connected to a junction box located in a stairwell, far more than a foot away from any given unit. If the rule was not amended, Liberty argued, it would have to rewire apartment buildings, adding to the costs and making it more difficult for Liberty to attract new customers.

Led by Richard Aurelio, the president of Time Warner's New York City Cable Group, a delegation of five Time Warner officials showed up at Hundt's office. The Time Warner executives sat on two worn beige couches facing Hundt, who had taken off his jacket and slid into an armchair. After some polite banter, the subject switched to what Time Warner saw as unfair competition from Liberty Cable. "To me, the proposal to change the demarcation"—the twelve-inch line—"is the ultimate outrage," Aurelio, a bearlike man, with gold-framed eyeglasses and a dark mustache, said in a surprisingly hushed voice. "It bestows on our competitors, in Manhattan alone, a one-hundred-million-dollar gift." He ticked off some other outrages. "We feel it's the taking of property," he said, for Liberty would be piggybacking on Time Warner's wires. Liberty already had certain advantages, he said. Unlike cable franchises, Liberty beams its signals from transmitters on the roofs of tall buildings to satellite dishes on the tops of smaller individual apartment buildings, and therefore is not burdened by the cost of tearing up city streets to lay cable, or of paying a municipal franchise fee, or of agreeing to wire every school, library, and government building and to set aside public-access time and "provide universal service," so that every community in the five boroughs will have access to cable—all costs that Time Warner volunteered to pay under its franchise agreement. Meanwhile, Aurelio said, Liberty is seeking to wire only the best buildings in the richest borough—skimming the cream, as he put it.

"What do you expect them to do?" Hundt asked. "Isn't that what you're doing on the telephone side? You picked Rochester, not Elmira."

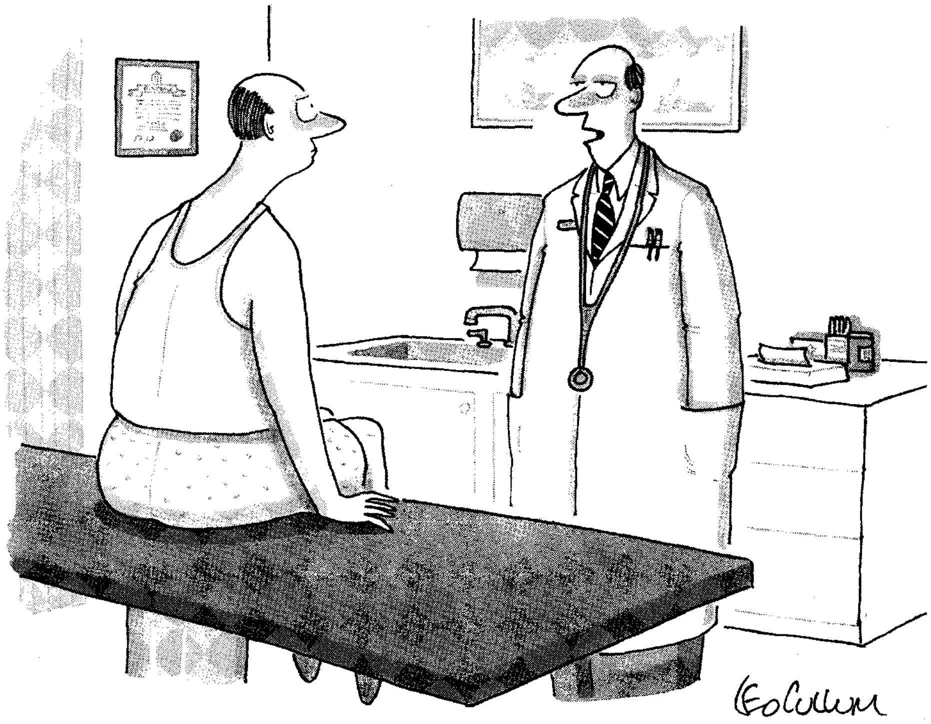
One of Time Warner's Washington lawyer-lobbyists, Arthur Harding, of Fleischman & Walsh, said that a look at one of the junction boxes that house a building's cable wiring would strengthen Time Warner's claims. An engineering executive, Larry Pestana, thereupon stood up and displayed a wooden box that was about two feet high and three feet wide and deep. He showed that the thick wires inside would have to be pulled out and connected to Liberty's own box if Liberty's request was granted.

"You should know that they have taken over some of our wires and they've never offered to pay us," Time Warner's counsel, Robert Jacobs, said of Liberty.

Hundt pointed out that Liberty had said it was willing to pay a fee to be connected to wire that Time Warner had laid, just as Time Warner would have to pay a fee to a Baby Bell for access to telephone customers.

When the meeting had gone on for half an hour, Hundt said, "I'd like to make a suggestion. My staff needs to know how you plan to do the telephone business. We need to treat you as a new entrant into the telephone business, just as we treat Liberty as a new entrant into your business. Second, get back to us on how Liberty should compensate you." Hundt went on, "There's more here to learn than I can learn in half an hour. I can't take it all in. But I want you to understand that we're looking for some principle of fairness that allows them"—Liberty—"to compete. My sense now is that we don't have enough information to make a judgment."

"If competition is good, the only way



"This _is_ *a second opinion. At first, I thought you had something else."*

to achieve competition is by having at least two wires," Jacobs said.

Not necessarily, Hundt replied. Some proposals to allow phone companies to enter the cable business would permit them to use the same wire.

Two companies sharing a wire wouldn't work, Aurelio said. It would be "a nightmare for consumers," because there could be signal leakages, and if something went wrong each company would blame the other.

After the meeting, Hundt told me that he thought the F.C.C. would inevitably be drawn into such issues as Liberty's request. It was, in fact, much the same issue that the commission would face when long-distance telephone companies petitioned to connect to local wires, or local companies to long-distance wires.

Aurelio was uneasy about the meeting. "It boggles my mind that they get into such details," he said in the hallway after leaving Hundt's office. "Talk about micromanaging! But he's showing an openness. He wants to learn."

I asked how the F.C.C. could keep from micromanaging, since both Time Warner and Liberty had requested a factual ruling.

He knew that the commission had to rule, Aurelio said, but what troubled him was that Hundt was getting personally involved in details that ought to be adjudicated by the technical staffs. " 'Micromanagement' is the wrong word," he said. "What I'm really saying is that, given the global ramifications of this issue, it was not prudent for him to rush into a decision on this without his staff understanding all the technical details of what wire goes where."

Hundt obviously came to agree with Aurelio, because within days he decided to delay a decision, and had his legal office convene a meeting on January 18th of representatives from Time Warner, Liberty, and the various wired and wireless trade associations. The F.C.C.'s five commissioners are currently reviewing the case.

A FLOWERING

Now that my body grows woman-like I look at men
As two or three women have looked at me, then hide
Among Ovid's lovely casualties—all that blood
Coloring the grass and changing into flowers, purple,
Lily-shaped, wild hyacinth upon whose petals
We doodled our lugubrious initials, they and I,
Blood dosed with honey, tumescent, effervescent
—Clean bubbles in yellow mud—creating in an hour
My own son's beauty, the truthfulness of my nipples,
Petals that will not last long, that hang on and no more,
Youth and its flower named after the wind, anemone.

—MICHAEL LONGLEY

ONE of the most consequential matters that will soon cross Hundt's desk—what to do about high-definition television—was the subject of another meeting in Hundt's office, on December 8th. The commission's director of technology policy, Saul T. Shapiro, entered with both good news and bad news. The good news, he said, was that there had been a historic breakthrough.

Early in 1987, the broadcasting community in the United States had resigned itself to the likelihood that HDTV sets under development in Japan would be marketed here, and that the quality of the picture would be so alluring that consumers would abandon the TV sets they had, compelling the TV stations and the networks to make huge new investments in high-definition cameras and other equipment. The issue then had been "pretty pictures," Hundt says, and the problem was that the image on an analogue-television screen—the sort that we had then and still have—was composed of about five hundred horizontal scanning lines, while high-definition pictures would use double this number. To continue using the analogue system to send high-definition pictures would have required both new equipment and more spectrum. Broadcasters feared that some stations would lose their spectrum space to HDTV.

Alarmed, the Reagan-Bush Administration, though it had denounced government-directed industrial policies, adopted an industrial policy to protect the broadcast industry. It wasn't called that, though. In September of 1987, the F.C.C. established an Advisory Committee on Advanced Television Service to devise an American alternative. In May of 1993, companies backing four alternative systems formed an alliance and decided to develop a single system, called ATV.

By last December—this was the good news that Saul Shapiro announced to Hundt—there had been so many technological breakthroughs that "calling it high definition isn't even appropriate anymore," Shapiro said. The ATV system would consist of digitized signals, and, because of advances in digital compression, the system would be able to offer six or seven channels, with resolution equal to conventional analogue television, in the airwave space now occupied by one channel. Or a broadcaster could choose to offer remarkably crisp high-definition television over a single channel. "Technology is no longer a bottleneck," Shapiro announced. "The key for us is: What is our policy?"

That was where the "bad" news came in. The policy and its political implications would be far-reaching. The broadcast spectrum had traditionally been so limited that when the F.C.C. was formed its chief mission had been to ration it. The government had used this scarcity argument ever since to justify imposing certain public-trust obligations—news, children's programming, and community programming—on the holders of the rare licenses. But now Shapiro reported that instead of facing scarcity, instead of being forced to choose winners and losers, the nation was on the verge of abundance. "We must explore the policy implications of this," an excited Hundt told his staff at the end of the meeting with Shapiro. The decisions about allotting the extra channels would probably crystallize this summer, he said.

The competition could be fierce, because the stakes are enormous. By way of contrast, the aim of the wireless auction that began on December 5th was to sell a hundred and twenty megahertz of spectrum; ATV dwarfs that, with the equivalent of two hundred megahertz of spectrum. A day after the meeting with Shapiro, Hundt said, "The public-policy issues are who gets the extra spectrum and how do they get it. And, after you deal with that, the question is what do they get to do with it. In the course of asking these questions, someone has to stand up and say, 'Here's the public interest.' Yesterday's briefing told us we could take one channel and get six or seven channels. Should one of these be reserved for the local community? Should one be reserved for children's programming? Should one of these be for an all-news channel—a local CNN? These are all possibilities." So are channels reserved for culture, or transmitting data, or the Internet, or home shopping, or interactive distant learning, or games, or gambling.

The question remains: Is this extra spectrum space to be a gift, a sale, or a trade?

A MORE immediate clash preoccupied Hundt—a petition by NBC to force Rupert Murdoch's Fox television network, which was aggressively cutting into NBC's market, to reduce its level of foreign ownership or to allow American networks to seek foreign investment without limits. The NBC petition claimed that Murdoch's Australian corporation holds majority control of Fox, and thus violates the law that limits foreign ownership of a broadcast company with an F.C.C. license to twenty-five per cent. Murdoch, in a letter to Hundt, said that NBC's motive was to thwart "robust competition." Hundt's F.C.C., which had been reviewing the question of Fox's foreign ownership by the time of NBC's petition, issued a confidentiality order.

Already, there are signs that the challenge to Murdoch will embroil the F.C.C. in a political fight. Senator Pressler and other Republicans have complained about the F.C.C.'s "gag order" (which has been softened to cover only certain documents). In the late fall, Murdoch made the rounds, meeting with Speaker-designate Newt Gingrich and with other Republican leaders who share his conservative views. Two weeks before the November elections, Murdoch's *TV Guide*, the largest-circulation weekly publication in America, printed as an advertisement the Republican "Contract with America." According to Haley Barbour, the chairman of the Republican National Committee, Gingrich wanted to run the ad, and the committee paid three hundred thousand dollars for it. A move that was more widely noticed was that HarperCollins, which is owned by Murdoch, agreed to pay Gingrich a four-and-a-half-million-dollar advance to write two books. (Murdoch insists that he was unaware of the book deal, and Gingrich claims he did not know that Murdoch owned HarperCollins.) Understandably, Murdoch has not restricted his visits to Republicans. In November, he paid a call on Hundt and F.C.C. staff members to speak about the prospects of ATV. In early December, Hundt showed me a postcard he'd got from "my new best friend." It was a Christmas card showing Murdoch in a yellow sweater on his boat, flanked by his wife and their son, daughter, and son-in-law.

Beyond Murdoch, there are other questions that await the attention of Reed Hundt and of Congress—particularly subsidy questions. Should government permit the telephone companies to have current customers pay to cross-subsidize the cost of starting up video services? Should government impose universal-service obligations on video services, as it does on phone service? And what would universal service mean in that case—that customers can have access to all services, or that services must be affordable to all? Should all taxpayers subsidize tax credits to increase opportunities for minority ownership? Should government support public broadcasting—as Representative Markey and former F.C.C. Chairman Newton Minow, among others, have proposed—by diverting proceeds from the spectrum auctions? Or, with channel choices proliferating, should government get out of the public-broadcasting-subsidy business altogether? That is the view of Senator Pressler, who says that the Corporation for Public Broadcasting should be sold, to save the two-hundred-and-eighty-six-million-dollar federal subsidy.

Hundt says he hopes that one day there will be so much competition that he will work himself out of a job. If the Republicans have their way, that day may arrive sooner than Hundt desires. One version of Senator Pressler's blueprint of telecommunications legislation contains a proposal to "downsize the F.C.C." And Gingrich's advisers have urged him to introduce legislation to abolish the F.C.C. and rely instead on existing antitrust laws to prevent monopolistic practices.

The bipartisan consensus has unquestionably been weakened. Back on December 9th, however, in a staff meeting that Blair Levin conducted in Hundt's office, the flame of optimism for a political coming together still glowed. Robert Peck, the deputy director of the F.C.C.'s Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, reported that Vice-President Gore had scheduled a meeting to discuss a common approach to telecommunications issues on January 9th, and that Senator Pressler and Representative Fields would participate. The goal, he said, would be to enunciate a bipartisan statement of principles.

Neither Pressler nor Fields nor any other congressional Republicans appeared at Gore's meeting. That was the day Pressler had scheduled the hearing of the Senate Commerce Committee: the Republicans had decided to formulate their own legislation separately and then pressure the Democrats to go along with it. Senate Republicans who had protested the F.C.C.'s Murdoch gag order now imposed a gag order of their own, banning staff members from talking to lobbyists or the press about telecommunications legislation. On January 19th and 20th, House Republicans held an off-the-record meeting with the executives of communications companies.

Although the Democrats were in danger of becoming spectators, Hundt remained undaunted. He told me in mid-January that he remained optimistic. "The problems here are less likely to be between Democrats and Republicans than between entrenched businesses," he declared. The real obstacle to reform, he said, comes not from the government but from business—from captains of industry who complain about bureaucrats but then act like them. ♦

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POPULAR CHRONICLES

SUPER-DUPER

Getting to the Super Bowl is one thing, but making it through Super Bowl week in Miami requires a game plan all its own.

BY SUSAN ORLEAN

I LEARNED a lot by spending a week in Miami just before Super Bowl XXIX. For instance, I learned the superlative degree of the word "nude" just by reading the ads in the Miami *Herald*. Throughout Super Bowl week, dozens of night clubs declared that they would be throwing the Super Bowl party of the year; as the competition heated up, one club went to a hurry-up offense, changing its ad from "Wide Screen TVs—Nude Girls" to "W-i-d-e Screen TVs—Nudest Girls in Miami." At a press conference heralding the resurrection of the World Football League, I learned from former 49ers coach Bill Walsh how the new league would redefine football. "I can tell you this," Walsh said, with emotion. "You will see the ball thrown and caught." Excellent. I learned that even cops call bad guys bad guys. This came up at the Stolen Ticket Press Conference, held after some smart-aleck conned a Federal Express office into giving him packages containing two hundred and sixty-two Super Bowl tickets intended for the Miami Dolphins. "We don't want to say much more than that," the police spokesman declared. "It would be unfortunate if the bad guys found out what we know."

I learned that some American men still haven't heard of Lycra. The hostesses at the Bud Bowl party, on the Tuesday before the game, were a half-dozen young women with large breasts and collapsing mountains of hair, wearing really tight tube dresses that were meant to look like Budweiser labels. The dresses provoked spirited but ignorant conjecture at the party regarding how a girl could get into one of them. Oh, Dan Marino was there, too. I thought this was kind of exciting—after all, Marino is the Miami Dolphins' quarterback, we were in Miami, we were getting ready for the year's climactic football game, and spotting N.F.L. players seemed to be the pregame sport of the week—so I mentioned it to a football fan as I was leaving the party. He had a plate of stone-crab claws in one hand and a Polaroid of himself discussing the merits of a nickel-back defense with some of the Bud Girls in the other. "He *was*?" the fan said. "*Marino*? Oh. I didn't notice."

I learned that the Super Bowl and the

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L. Rosenwald

LAURIE ROSENWALD

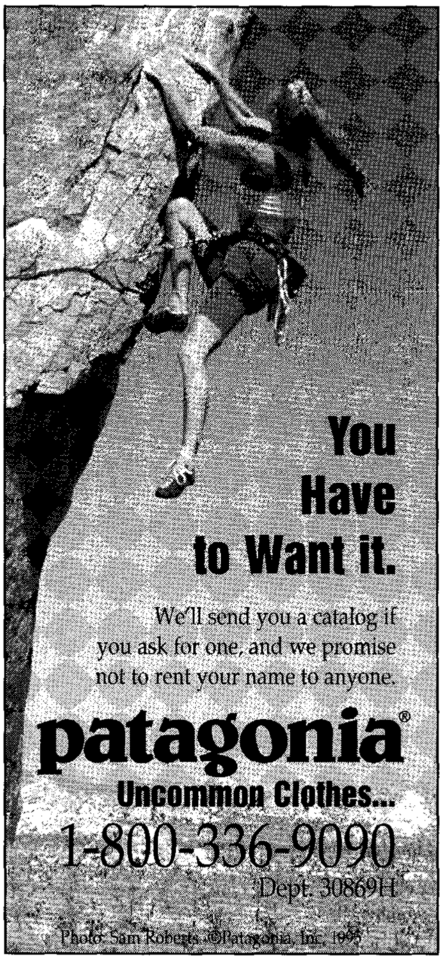
week of revelry leading up to it feels exactly like prom week—if you had happened to go to a high school with seventy-four thousand in the graduating class and your prom had been televised to seven hundred and fifty million people worldwide and your parents had been liberal about your curfew and you had accessorized your prom outfit by wearing on your head a piece of polyurethane foam shaped like a thunderbolt (if you were a Chargers fan), or a miner's pickaxe (if you were for the 49ers). The only difference—which in the case of most Super Bowls turns out to be a minor one—is that most proms don't feature a football game.

If football is a metaphor for war, then Super Bowl week is a metaphor for football. Throughout the week, everything had a sort of battlefield urgency and martial precision. Posted at the Media Center: "Following is a press release regarding the Super Bowl Sod. It is from Bermuda Dunes (near Palm Springs), California, *not* Las Vegas. . . . It is very important for it to be known that the sod is from Palm Springs . . . and not Las Vegas, as has previously been reported." Over the P.A. at an outdoor souvenir fair: "Attention, personnel! We need mini-helmets at the autograph booth! Mini-helmets! *A.S.A.P.!*" At the Commissioners' Party, an enormous gala at the Miami Beach Convention Center, the league owners were penned in a corner apart from the crowd and were guarded by wiry tough guys with walkie-talkies. One tough guy had collared a small, tan man with luminous white hair who was heading into the pen. "Station to command base," the guard said into his walkie-talkie. "I have a certain individual here asserting he is one of the owners of the Seattle Seahawks. Can you clear me?" He was, and they did.

The Super Bowl is billed as the ultimate American sporting event and the ultimate athletic battle: no other television broadcast attracts a larger audience, and the money and effort that people spend to attend it is stupendous. But during my week in Miami I didn't feel that I was on the brink of a singular, decisive battle: I felt that I was bouncing from one little skirmish to another—the mini-helmet crisis, the heavy-duty credentials checkpoints at the parties, the elbowing through crowds to get near one of the players, the press briefings about which Charger had a case of the gout and whether the 49ers practiced in full pads or just in sweatclothes. Very few Super Bowls ever turn out to be exciting games. This is blamed, variously, on the misalignment in the two football conferences, which means the matchup always has one clearly superior team; on the fact that you can never guarantee that any single game in any sport will be suspenseful (as opposed to a playoff series, which builds momentum); or on the simple fact that nothing, no matter how thrilling, could ever live up to the hype that precedes every Super Bowl. Still, everyone runs around all week in a state of high excitation. There *is* a real contest at the Super Bowl, but it's not on the field—it's a battle for tickets and hotel rooms and invitations and autographs and access and souvenirs, and requires both an offensive and a defensive strategy.

The Merchandise Bowl was decided early in the first quarter of Super Bowl week, with victory going to the mini-footballs, which are about the size of a hand grenade and are totally adorable. Other contenders were Super Bowl hats, pins, earrings, coffee mugs, ashtrays, key chains, and diaper bags, and, of course, the Super Bowl sweatshirt, with appliquéd lettering, which cost $79.98. This seemed expensive, especially since Hosty the Super Bear, the mascot of the South Florida Super Bowl XXIX Host Committee, had taken an Official Super Bowl Superhost Pledge, assuring visitors that Miami merchants would be offering fair prices and quality service, despite the powerful temptation to gouge the seventy-four thousand fans in town for the game. I expressed surprise at the sweatshirt price to one vender, and he explained, with special Super Bowl Superhost logic, that it cost that much because it had "authentic stitching."

Autographs were going for free, at least at the N.F.L. Experience, which is a big football-themed carnival set up each year next to the Super Bowl stadium, with displays and games where you can test your football skills. Ken Stabler, the former quarterback of the Oakland Raiders, was there, signing stuff, one afternoon. The place was mobbed: a sign posted near the autograph table warned, in English and Spanish, that "Due to players' time constraints, no autographs guaranteed." I gave up on getting Stabler's autograph, and wandered around the on-



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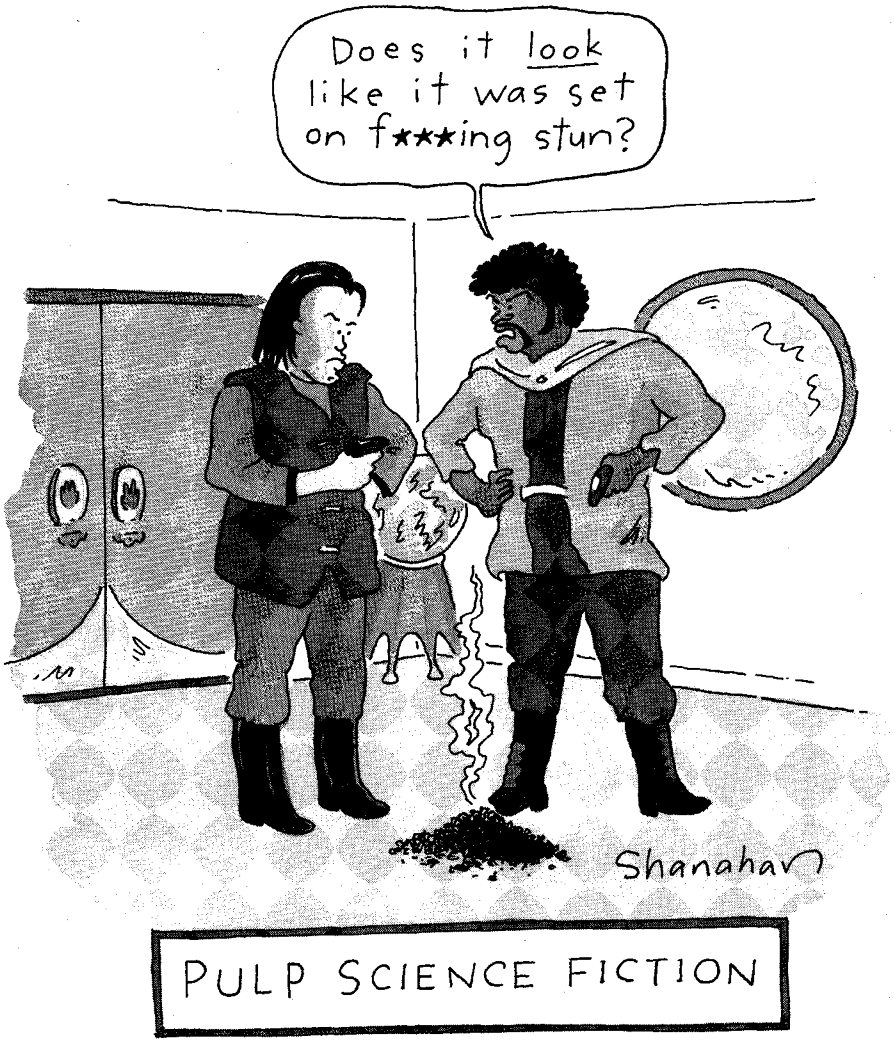
site Foot Locker store; the sand-sculpture busts of television commentators Dan Dierdorf, Frank Gifford, and Al Michaels; and booths for face painting, quarterback challenges, football cards, lost children, and a game called The Emmitt Zone, in which you dive for a pass over gigantic air mattresses shaped like Dallas Cowboys running back Emmitt Smith.

The underground economy typical of mega-events was in play early in the week: Miami was dotted with guys scalping tickets to get into the game (fifteen hundred dollars by midweek); guys scalping tickets to get into the N.F.L. Experience (twenty-five dollars for tickets that legitimately cost twelve dollars); guys with sandwich boards advertising for tickets ("True Fan Needs Tickets. Top Dollar Paid. Please Help"); guys offering to buy your press credentials, your tickets to any of the pregame parties, and even, the minute you stepped out of Joe Robbie Stadium after the game, your ticket stub (twenty dollars, any seat). Mega-events tend to inflame beyond reason—everyone wants to be part of them, and to take a piece of them home for possible future resale. At a souvenir booth at the game, an agitated fellow wearing a Chargers shirt pushed his way to the front of the line and tried to buy the Stadium Staff hat that the cashier was wearing. The cashier stared at him in amazement. "Don't you understand me?" the man barked at the cashier. "This is a major kind of day!" It is so major that many people come to the Super Bowl city without tickets, just to soak up the Super Bowl vibe. Some people don't seem to care whether they actually get into the game, but others hang on to the hope that they will eventually stumble on tickets. Except for the brokers and the scalpers, only a few opportunities present themselves. One Miami radio station offered a pair of tickets to the individual who could come up with the most disgusting stunt. Sadly, only one person could win; in this case, it was a young man who ate another young man's vomit. I was sorry the radio station didn't release the location of the winner's seats: I had wanted to be sure he wasn't seated anywhere near me.

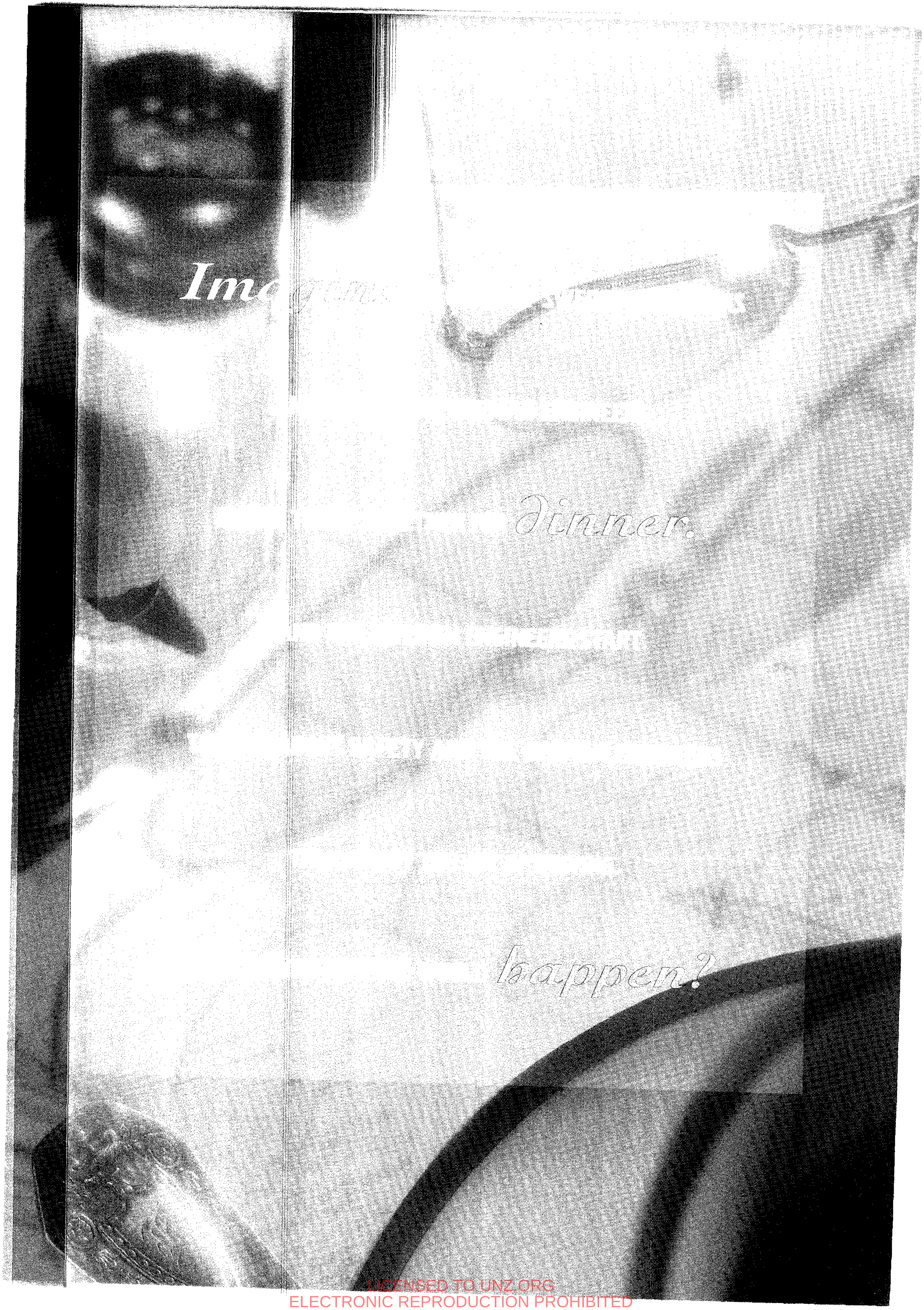

Does it look like it was set on f***ing stun?
Shanahan

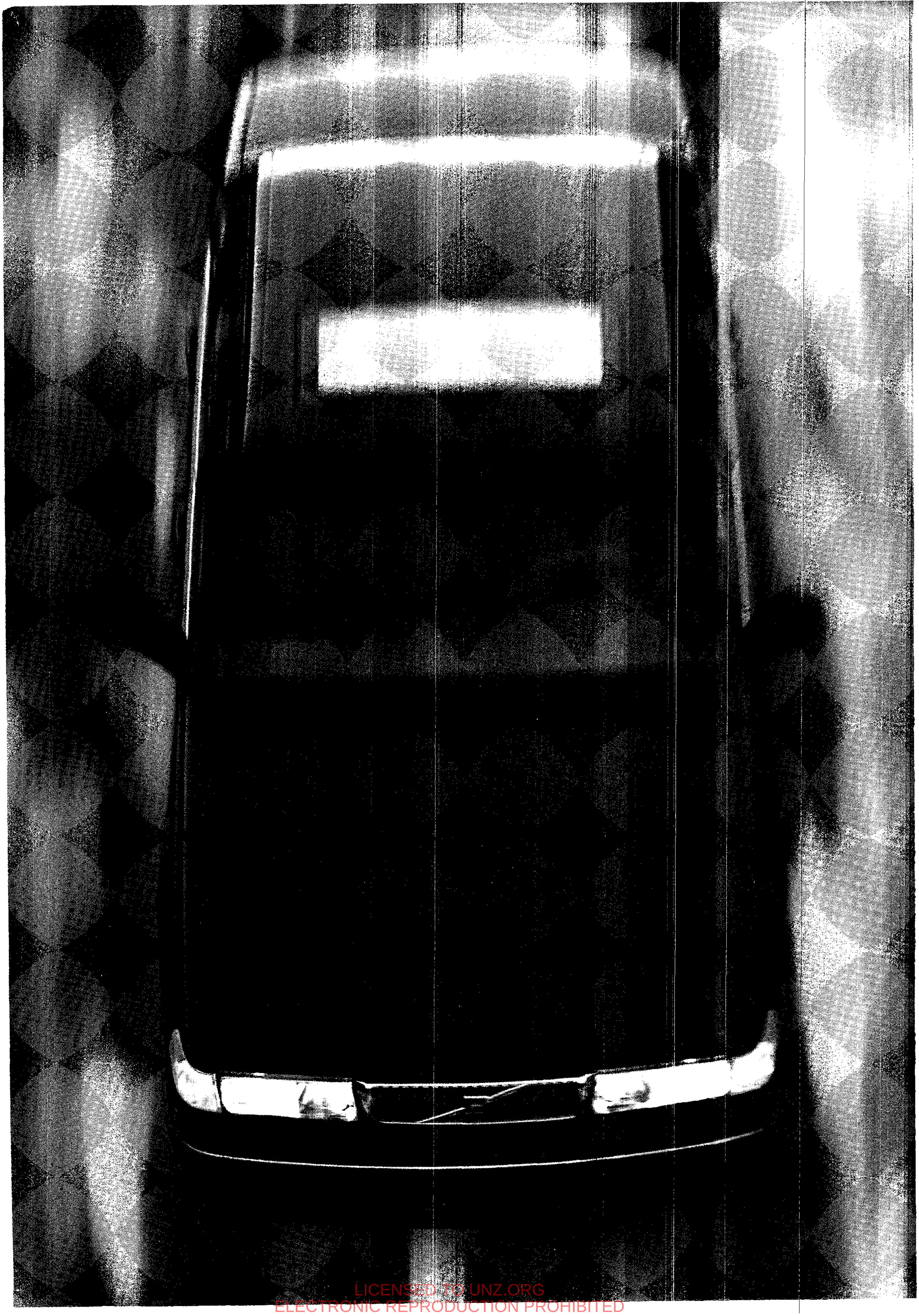
PULP SCIENCE FICTION

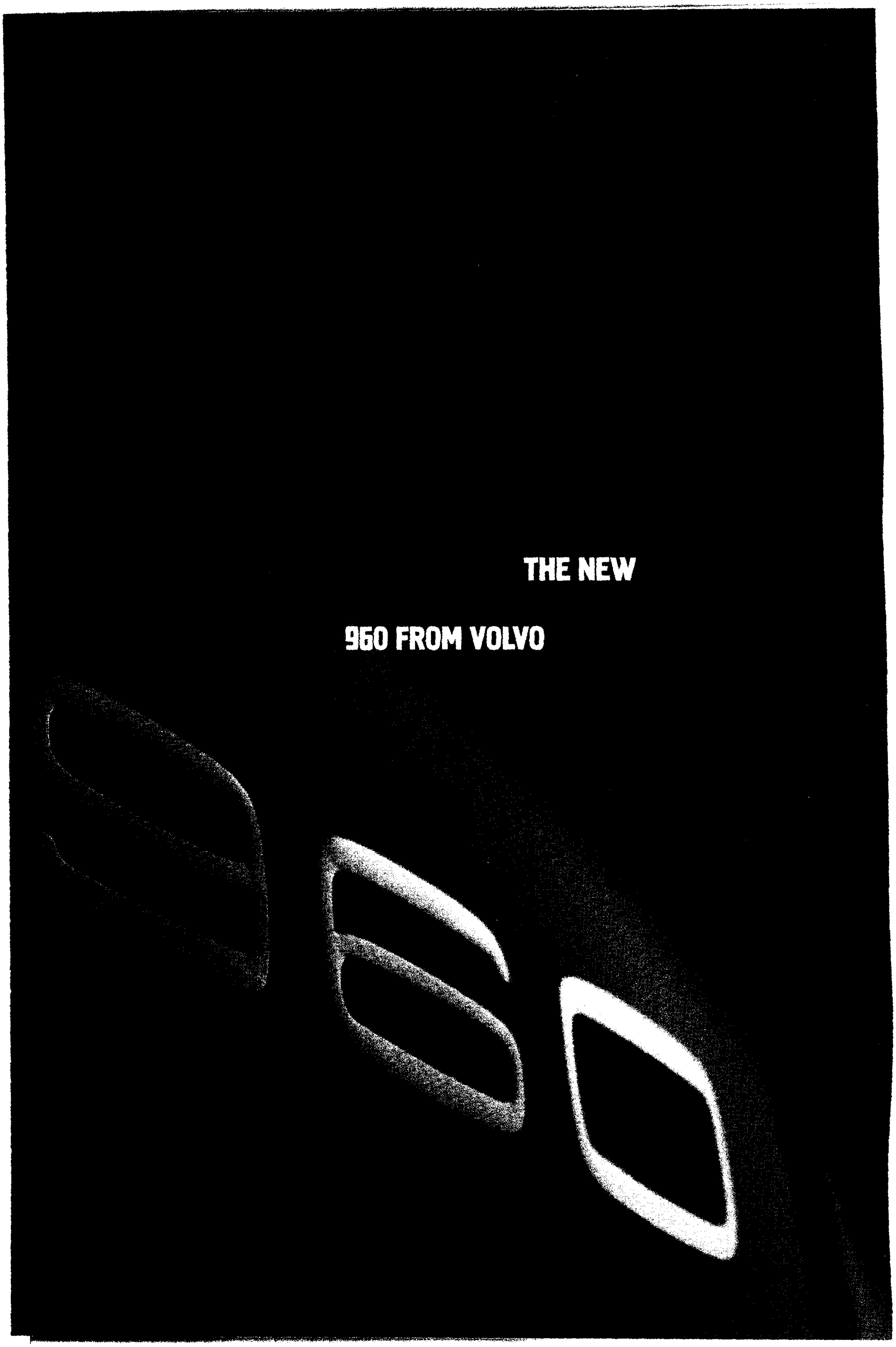
EVERYTHING about the Super Bowl is extra large—the parties, the prices, the buildup, the letdown. Even things you don't expect to be huge are huge. For instance, the average size of the man on the street in Miami during Super Bowl week was at an all-time high, because so many football players from other teams were in town for the game, and because so many fans had cultivated at least the form, if not the function, of an offensive lineman. There were times when it looked as if Miami were holding a big and tall men's convention. At an outdoor café on South Beach on Saturday, I passed a table of seven giants wearing straw cowboy hats and gold chains as thick as cobras; they looked like football players and acted as cocky as football players, and eventually drew a crowd of autograph seekers, whom they cheerfully obliged. They were not, in fact, football players. At that point it didn't seem to matter: they were big, enormous, cool-looking guys, and it was the day before the big game.

On Thursday, I had gone to the fashion show for the World Football League, which aspires to become the N.F.L.'s European counterpart, because I expected the models to be real football players; after all, it would look pretty weird to have a waif drift down the runway in a helmet and pads. The event did not pack them in, and that meant that I was among the few who saw the uniforms for the Barcelona Dragons, the London Monarchs, and the Düsseldorf Fire. When a model named Tim came out wearing the Amsterdam Admirals' uniform ("Tim's wearing an away jersey. . . . There's the insert in the pants for an aggressive-type look"), I remarked to a reporter sitting near me that I thought Tim was pretty cute and perhaps a little slight for a football player. The reporter snorted and turned to me. "That's no *player*," he said, shaking his head. "That's just some surfer."

The real players—the 49ers and the Chargers, that is—were scarce, except on Friday, when the 49ers' Ricky Watters, William Floyd, Todd Kelly, and Toi Cook, along with Tim Irwin of the Dolphins, showed up at a press conference announcing a joint venture between Tommy Boy Music and Gridiron Records which will give football stars the opportunity to become recording stars. Then Watters, Floyd, and Kelly performed a rap


Imagine
dinner.
happen?

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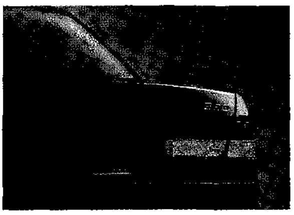

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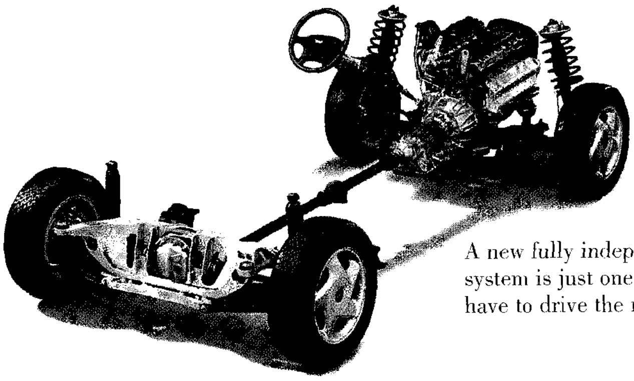

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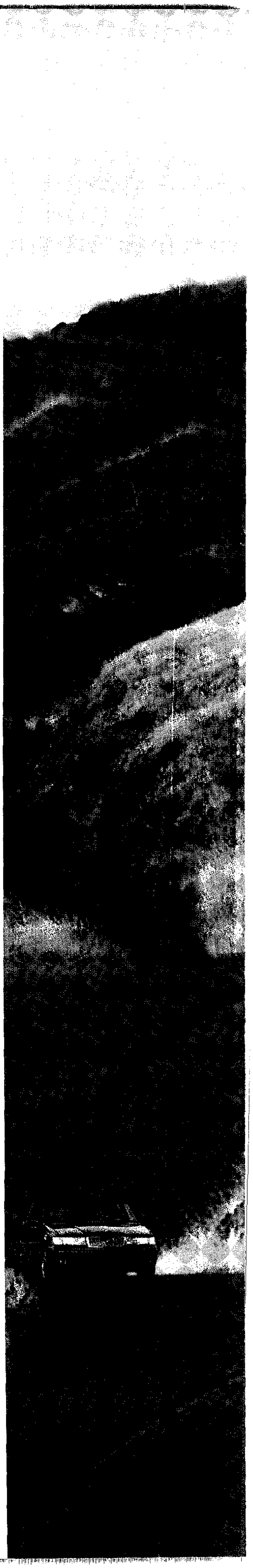

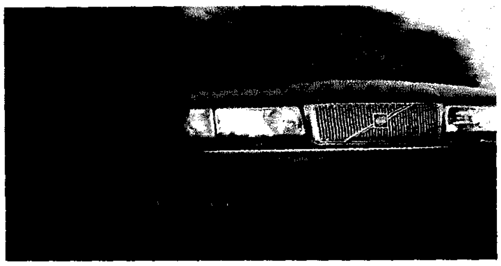

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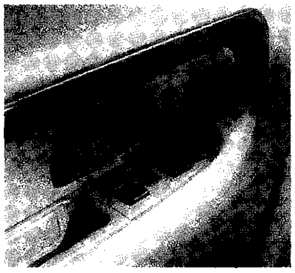

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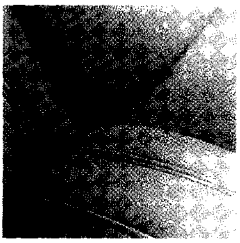

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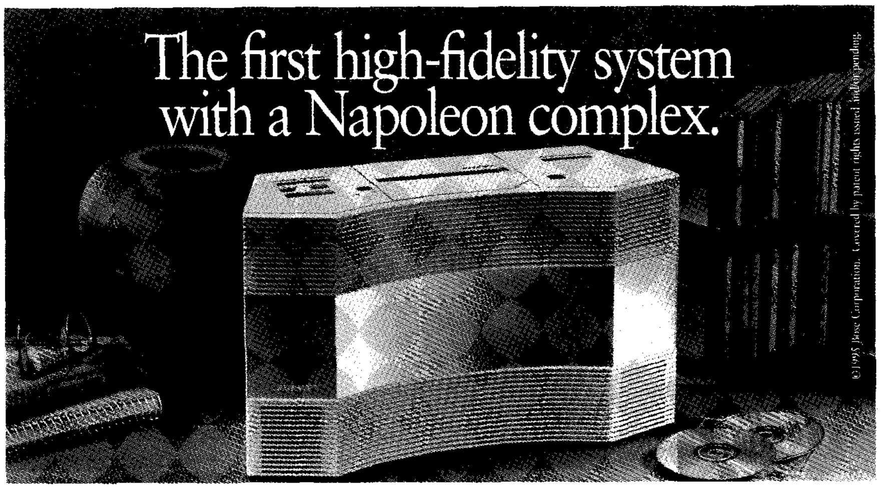
song, and Irwin sang a few bars of a wistful country paean to his GMC truck. The female rappers Salt-N-Pepa had come to give the singers moral support. When someone in the audience asked them what an athlete needed to succeed as a rapper, Salt—or maybe it was Pepa—chuckled and said, "A nice *butt.*"

AT last, it was time for what had been described at one press briefing as "the on-the-field part of the product"—the ultra-big event that 49er Bart Oates had said early in the week he considered "better than a poke in the eye with a sharp stick." On game day, the parking lots were filled with tailgate parties and with people still trying to buy tickets. Dozens of white tents had been set up beside the stadium: this was the Corporate Hospitality Village, where companies like Ford and Budweiser and Reebok were holding lavish private parties for their guests. The tents made the place look like a refugee camp, except that the V.I.P. parking lot beside the Corporate Hospitality Village was packed with long white stretch limos—almost a hundred of them, idling in endless rows. Overhead, planes hauling banners buzzed back and forth: "FLORIDA PEST CONTROL WORKS FOR YOU," followed by "PRES. CLINTON: PUNISH CASTRO NOT OUR KIDS AT GITMO AND PANAMA," then "LET US CUBANS SACK CASTRO," and then "THE REAL WINNER IS JESUS."

The real winners, of course, were the 49ers. It happened in a flash: Steve Young passed to Jerry Rice for a touchdown one minute and twenty-four seconds into the first quarter, and half the people around me threw their hands up and said, "Well, that's the game." It was, and three and a half unsuspenseful hours later, the final score was 49–26. In their locker room after the game, the San Francisco players looked sweaty and happy but not the least bit surprised. I talked for a while with Chris Dalman, an offensive lineman with pink cheeks and with upper arms the size of turkeys. I had never seen upper arms like that in my life. He was telling me that it really hurts to play football, and that after a game you feel lousy for a couple of days. I finally interrupted him and asked him if he had any idea of the circumference of his arms, and he said he didn't. "I don't even know exactly how tall I am," he said. "The one size I need to know is my ring size, and that's a Super Bowl size 14." ♦



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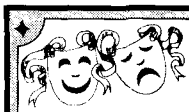
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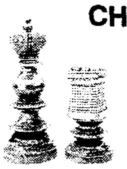
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A REPORTER AT LARGE

A NIGHT AT THE BEAST HOUSE

Don Paradis, a hard-luck member of the West Coast biker gang called the Gypsy Jokers, was convicted of killing a woman in a sordid double murder after a nightlong fight at his house. A reinvestigation of the night's events reveals that Paradis may not have been the murderer—so why is he about to be executed?

BY ALEC WILKINSON

ONE may as well begin with the solitary house in the hills above Post Falls, Idaho. A small frame house beside a rising dirt road that leads deeper into the forest. In the summer of 1980, a woman named Ruth Jones lived there. One morning about an hour after daybreak, she was standing in her yard when she heard a car some distance away—something was wrong with its muffler, and it made a lot of noise. The car was an old Volkswagen van, blue and white. In its rear window was a decal of the trademark for the company that builds Harley-Davidson motorcycles. The van passed quickly and went up the steep road into the hills. Mrs. Jones told the police she thought that "quite a few" people had been inside it; later, she testified that there had been "either two or three." The person closest to her—the passenger in the front seat—might have been wearing a cap; she wasn't sure.

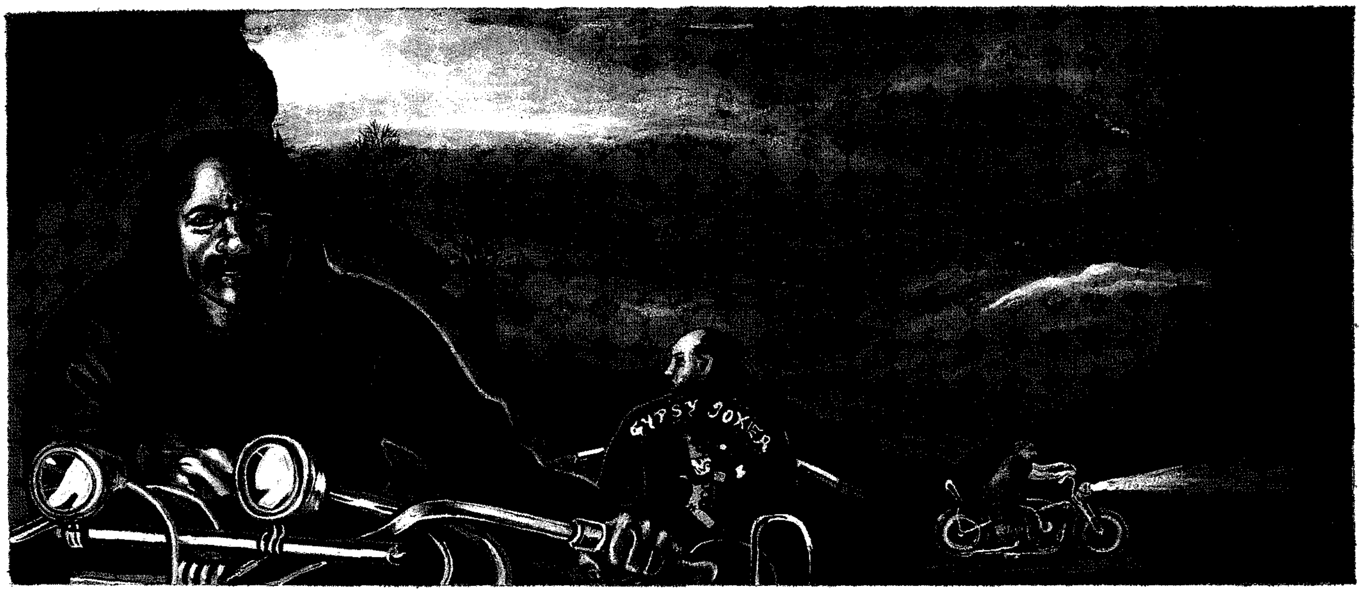
Back in her house, she turned on the television and sat down in a chair. Fifteen or twenty minutes passed, perhaps thirty. Her dog began to bark. She went to the window and saw three men on the road from the hills. They walked toward her, then past. Two were tall, and one, she said, was short and "heavyset and dark-complected." All three had long hair and dark, heavy beards. She guessed that they were between twenty-five and thirty years old. Across his shoulders, the tallest one carried a blue blanket wrapped around something long and rigid. All she remembered of the men otherwise was that they were "very, very dirty."

The short man is named Don Paradis, and the two tall men are Larry Evans and Tom Gibson. Gibson was carrying a shotgun in the blanket. Paradis belonged to a clannish and belligerent motorcycle gang called the Gypsy Jokers, which has a number of chapters in the Pacific Northwest; Paradis was a member of the one in Spokane, Washington. Among the members, he was known as Red Rider. Larry Evans was a junior member of the Jokers, a pledge. He was known as Igor. Tom Gibson belonged to a gang called the Vagos; he was a member of a chapter in Oregon, and he was known as Chief. In the hills above Post Falls, they had left the bodies of a young man and woman. The young man had belonged to a violent California motorcycle gang called the Hessians; he was killed in a brawl that began in the middle of the night at Paradis's house in Spokane. The young woman was his girlfriend. According to witnesses, she was killed in the house soon after the brawl was over. The details of the murders are lurid and grotesque and appear to involve a frenzy of violence and perversion which resembled a state of possession; the young man's corpse was battered, and, witnesses say, the young woman's was sexually assaulted.

Paradis says that he was not at his house when the murders took place. Of the five people who were at the house when the young man was killed, two have said that Paradis was there. One of these has said he was lying at his trial, and the other says that his recollection of the night has always been vague and incomplete, and that it is just as possible that Paradis was not there as it is that he was. Two people have said that he wasn't there. The fifth doesn't know if Paradis was there or not. No witness has ever said that Paradis was at the house when the young woman was killed. Paradis says that he came home and found the bodies and decided to get rid of them rather than take his chances with the truth and the police; the Gypsy Jokers' mistrust of the police is emphatic and implacable.

Paradis, Gibson, and Evans were tried in Idaho for the murder of the young woman; the prosecutor described a theory of the crime that said the murder of the young woman took place in the hills above Post Falls. The testimony of the medical examiner allowed the prosecutor to offer details of the murder which made his theory appear plausible to the juries at the trials of Paradis and Gibson, but not to the jury at Evans's trial. Like Gibson, Paradis was convicted and sentenced to death; his appeals are nearly exhausted. A stay of execution that his lawyers obtained in 1987 was dissolved on January 24th. His lawyers hope to obtain another, but if they are unable to, and everything else goes against them, Paradis could be executed within a matter of weeks. A more accomplished lawyer than the one he had might have saved him; that lawyer later filed an affidavit saying he believed that this was so. Sufficient police work might have saved him; what actually happened on that night might then have been known.

I would not try to persuade anyone that Paradis is a conventionally appealing character, or that there are not elements of his past as a biker that many reasonable people would regard as being beyond the pale. In his pre-sentence report one finds the following entry: "After considering the Defendant's extensive court record and his many years of association in the subculture of the motorcycle clubs, it appears his values are not normal." He liked to drink and take drugs, he fought frequently in bars, he was intimate with a number of people who spent as much of their lives in jail as out of it, and he carried a knife, which he pulled on occasion. Nevertheless, there is evidence that suggests he might not be guilty, and it is typical of the luckless ironies of his life that it has so far failed to make any difference whatever in his circumstances.



“We’re the first motorcycle club that went to war with the Hell’s Angels and didn’t die,” one Joker says.

SUE COE

I HAVE never met Paradis. He lives in isolation at the Idaho Maximum Security Institution, in Boise. Only his family, his lawyers, and his pastor can visit him. I know about him because I received a call from a woman who said that her husband represented a man on death row who was innocent. I said, “How do you know that you don’t have a garden-variety sociopath saying, ‘As God is my witness, I never killed anyone’?,” and she said that the story was more complicated than that.

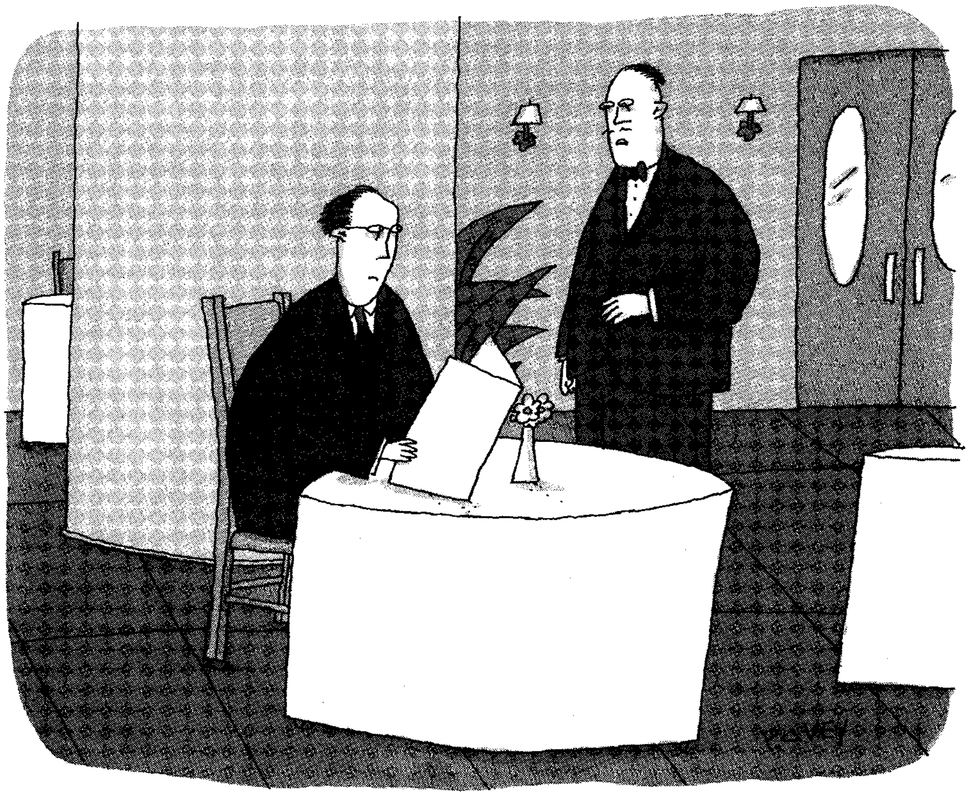
Paradis and I talk now and then on the phone. I cannot call him. He calls from the law library at the prison, or from a phone that he can sometimes arrange to have brought to his cell, or from a phone in the yard he is allowed to visit an hour a day, except on Saturdays and Sundays, when he cannot leave his cell.

He was thirty-one when he went into prison, and he will soon be forty-six. He is squat and broad-beamed. At the end of his first year in prison, he weighed three hundred and sixty-five pounds; he now weighs about two hundred and thirty. As Mrs. Jones said, his complexion is dark. He has dark-brown hair that reaches his waist and that he usually wears in a braid, and he has a thick, dark-brown mustache. His face is full and round, and his eyes are dark and watery. In photographs, he often has the hapless, melancholy look of a commercial fisherman.

Paradis was born in 1949 in Fall River, Massachusetts, to a single woman who was not young. She gave him up for adoption, and he was brought home by his new parents at ten days and grew up an only child. His adoptive father had a job in a factory that made galvanized pails, and for a while his adoptive mother ran a steam press in a garment mill. An aunt, his adoptive mother’s sister, says that his adoptive father was fond of him, but that the treatment he received from his adoptive mother was cruel. “I watched him walk across the floor one time when he was about two,” the aunt says. “He was pigeon-toed, and he fell down and my sister started laughing, and I said, ‘What’s the matter with you, why are you always being so hard on this boy?’ and she said, ‘He’s stupid.’ I said, ‘He’s not stupid, he’s just got bad feet.’ ”

He was prone to accidents and was injured once when a brick fell on his head. When he was little, he served as an altar boy and thought about becoming a priest. The aunt says that his mother refused to give him a key to the house, which meant that he was occasionally forced to wander the city until someone came home to let him in. He and some friends were drinking one night on a park bench in New Bedford, about fifteen miles east of Fall River, and he fell asleep. His friends left, and he was awakened by a policeman. “They called my mother,” he says, “and told her, ‘We have your son, do you want to come down and get him?’ and she said, ‘No, lock him up.’ So that’s how I ended up in reform school.” He started to use heroin when he was thirteen and used it for three years. He was always fond of motorcycles and belonged to a club called the Huns. In his early twenties, he married, and he and his wife went to Alaska, where he worked in the Civil Service and began a motorcycle club called the Centurions. He and his wife had a daughter, and then divorced. In 1976, when he was twenty-seven, he married again, but the marriage was annulled.

The following year, he enrolled at Abbott Loop Charismatic Bible School, a Bible college in Anchorage. After three months, he left to join a group with plans to build a church in a town called Big Lake. While the minister and most of the rest of the group lived in Anchorage, Paradis lived in a tent at the site and cut trees and cleared brush. He says he opened a religious bookstore and delivered books on horseback to people in the woods and used a boat to reach clients on the river that flowed past the town. Tension developed between him and the minister over who was doing more to help the church get built. “I guess it was no big thing, but it hurt me,” Paradis says. “I felt then that I wanted to get back with people I knew



"I'm going across the street for a sandwich and coffee. Can I get you something?"

• •

and understood, and that was bikers." He joined the Gypsy Jokers and then went to Spokane to open a motorcycle shop with some friends. He found work as a maintenance man for the city's parks department, sweeping snow from the city's skating rink and picking up trash in the parks. Around the time of the murders, he was thinking of moving to Australia, where the Jokers have several chapters.

Paradis's mother was unable to read or write. The few letters he sent she took to a friend, who read them for her. After he was arrested, the police called her. She began telling her family then that she had lost touch with her son and had no idea where he was. The letters he sent she threw away.

As for the record of Paradis's convictions before the murders, in 1968, when he was nineteen, he was convicted of statutory rape, for being involved with a seventeen-year-old girl. In Alaska, in 1976, he was picked up for being drunk, and the police discovered that he had a gun. Another time, it was a switchblade. His other convictions involve such minor offenses as drug possession or broken tail-lights or missed stop signs and red lights or the inability to produce his license.

Paradis's voice is deep and mild, he speaks slowly, and his manner is patient, courteous, weary, and somewhat resigned. The place where he can spend the hour a day that he is allowed out of his cell is an enclosure in the yard of the prison with cement walls and floor and chain-link wire where the ceiling would be. The only thing he can see is the sky. When I asked him to describe the place, he said, "If you've been to the dog pound and seen where they keep the dogs, it's like that."

MRS. JONES did not happen to leave her house for the rest of the day after seeing Paradis, Gibson, and Evans walking down the road. This was a Saturday: June 21, 1980. Later in the morning, she called a woman who lived farther up the road and asked if she had seen the van. She hadn't. As it happened, this woman didn't leave her house that day, either.

That night, a heavy rain fell. The next morning, Mrs. Jones and her husband got in their car and drove up the road to see the woman she had called. The rain made the dirt on the steep road slick. About a third of a mile from her house, Mrs. Jones saw the van on its side along a disused logging road that diverged from the road she and her husband were on. They continued up the hill; they were afraid that if they stopped their car to look at the van they wouldn't get going again. They spent a couple of hours visiting their friend, and then the three of them came back to Mrs. Jones's house and called the sheriff's department and reported the van.

A deputy came to look at it. As the wrecker he had summoned began raising the van, a car arrived driven by a man on his way to a house in the hills. The wrecker blocked the road. The deputy told the man he would have to wait. Then the deputy looked into the woods. Scattered through the draw below the van were a plastic drink cooler, some papers, a backpack, and a red sleeping bag. He climbed down to examine the sleeping bag. A creek ran through the bottom of the draw. The deputy saw what he thought were two shoes on the feet of a body lying in the creek. On his way to it, the deputy crossed a barbed-wire fence. The body lay face down in the creek. It had no shirt, but the deputy couldn't tell if it was a man or a woman. It was cold to his touch. He testified, "It was my determination that the individual could not be alive."

The man driving the car called the deputy's attention to another sleeping bag lying on the hillside closer to the road. This one was blue, and a piece of terry cloth had been used to tie the end of it shut.

"I examined the blue sleeping bag from the exterior," the deputy testified. "From the shape and the way it was laying on the ground, it appeared it did have something inside of it. I felt the exterior of the bag. There were what I would classify points, very consistent with possibly an elbow or a knee or a heel or the toe of an individual if they were inside the bag. I believe I grabbed one of those angular objects inside the bag and tried to move it, and it was stiff and difficult to move. At that point in my own mind I figured if the bag did in fact contain a body that there was no chance of the individual being alive."

The body in the creek was that of the young woman. She had scrapes and scratches on her chest. There was dried blood in her nose and her ear. Her forehead was bruised. She had a tattoo of a butterfly on one elbow and another tattoo of a butterfly on her groin. Underneath her left hip was a billed cap, and gathered around her neck was a T-shirt, on the front of which was written "Let's Party." Someone had evidently drawn the point of a knife across the front of her bluejeans, then down the left inseam. The cut had broken the zipper, so that her jeans lay open. She was not wearing any underwear. On her labia was a gash an inch and a half long and half an inch deep. According to William J. Brady, the medical examiner who performed the autopsy, in Portland, Oregon—there was no forensic pathologist in Idaho at the time—this cut showed "no evident vital reaction." In other words, it displayed no evidence of bleeding or healing, which suggested that it had been made some time after she was dead.

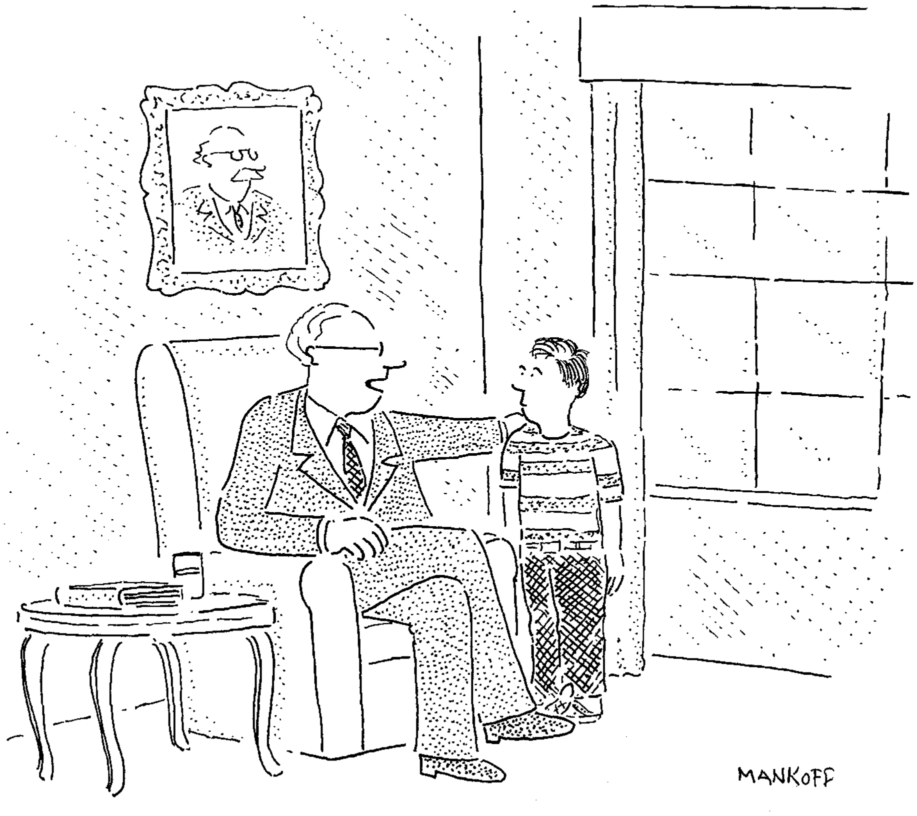
When the blue sleeping bag was opened, the body of the young man was discovered with a towel around his neck and another around one of his wrists. There was blood on the towels. He had on only a pair of underpants and one sock. His bluejeans and some of the rest of his clothes had been stuffed into the bag; the buckle had been cut from his belt. He had a tattoo on his lower left leg that said "Love My Brothers," and one on his right leg that said "Reefer Madness." His face was swollen and bruised. There were cuts above his left eye and his left eyebrow, and there was one on his forehead that revealed his skull. His left cheek was cut, his lips were swollen and bruised and cut, and on his jaw was a cut that ran nearly to the bone. His scalp was torn in a number of places, his skull was fractured, and he had suffered hemorrhages in his brain. Several of his ribs were broken and on his back were a number of small holes. Dr. Brady concluded that he had been beaten to death.

A woman named Sherry Owen, who worked in the United States Marshal's office in Spokane, heard a radio report about the bodies' being found and felt that she knew who they were. She left her office and went out to the street and bought a newspaper, then went back to her office and called the sheriff's department. At a funeral home in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, she identified her daughter, Kimberly Anne Palmer, nineteen, and her daughter's boyfriend, Scott Currier, twenty-six.

AGAINST a wall by the entrance to the Gypsy Jokers' clubhouse in Portland, Oregon, is a glass-fronted case called the Memory Case. Inside it are pictures of Jokers who have died, along with newspaper stories about how they died or their funerals, or some piece of clothing that they used to wear. Paradis's lawyer suggested that I call him before I went into the clubhouse and call again when I was out, so I did. My visit was arranged beforehand. First, I had to pass through a locked gate on the street on which was stencilled:

> Private Party. Absolutely No Trespassing. Violators Will Be Prosecuted. This Includes All Government and/or Law Enforcement Agencies.

Then I walked past a pit bull with a chain attached to its neck. I crossed a parking lot and went through a door and arrived in a big, high-ceilinged room. The windows had been painted over, and the light was dim. The clubhouse used to be a Harley-Davidson shop owned by a Joker. He kept alligators and snapping turtles in tanks in the basement. The Jokers say that after his store was broken into a few times he bought a harness for one of the alligators and walked up and down the street with him in front of the shop and didn't have trouble anymore. Inside the room was a dance floor painted in a black-and-white checkerboard pattern. There were banquettes and tables against the walls and a pool table and a video game and a pinball machine and a bar. What light there was came from a lamp above the bar. When I stepped into its range, a man behind the bar, looking at me, said, "What the fuck is *that*?" A Joker came up to me and said, "If I gave you a red S, would you give me a black eye?" I didn't know what to say. "Think about it," he said. "If I gave you a red S, would you give me a black eye?" I said, "No?" He walked over to the bar and got a red pen and drew an "S" on a napkin, and then with a black pen he drew an "I." He said, "I did that one time to a guy, and he told me, 'I guess I have to give you a black eye,' and he punched me. I couldn't figure out what to do, then I got a red plastic S and drove some upholstery tacks



"And remember, son, perception isn't reality—money is."

through it and went up and stuck it in his chest."

The Gypsy Jokers' origins are ambiguous. It is possible that they were formed in 1954 in Long Beach, Washington, by three guys named Gilo, Scotty, and Mars, and that a San Francisco gangster named Johnny Turner joined them within a couple of years; or it is possible that Turner began the club himself, in San Francisco, in 1956. In any case, they may first have been called the Frisco Jokers. They celebrate their anniversary on the first of April. The club spread to Oakland, California, and to other California towns such as Cupertino, Stockton, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Jose. In the middle of the nineteen-sixties, the Jokers began to have difficulty with the Hell's Angels, whose club was much larger and had chapters in some of the same cities. It has been a practice of the Angels to absorb smaller gangs; they welcome the most fearsome members and discard the rest. Some of the Jokers eventually became Angels, some retired, and some departed with a grievance for the Pacific Northwest, where they formed new chapters. "We're the first motorcycle club that went to war with the Hell's Angels and didn't die," a Joker told me.

The Jokers say that they have about a hundred members. (There are about a thousand Hell's Angels.) They are the largest motorcycle club in the Pacific Northwest. Their members are spread among three chapters in Oregon—Portland, Coos Bay, and Salem—and Washington chapters in Spokane and Seattle. Portland is the largest; the Jokers call it the mother chapter. In addition, there are solitary members dispersed among the backwoods of Idaho who attach themselves to the chapter in Spokane. The club is small by design. It doesn't recruit, and it seldom accepts new members.

Some Jokers: "Gypsy Jokers is the hardest club to get into and the easiest to get kicked out of."

"We're the top of the food chain."

"We're an élite club. Nobody messes with us. We don't cause trouble, but we don't tolerate zero of it, either."

"In school, some guys play football, some guys play basketball. We play motorcycles, and it's a serious game."

A man who is at least twenty-one and has his own motorcycle can apply for membership, or he can be brought to the attention of the club and be asked to join. Extraordinary attributes of strength, size, or ferocity are likely to bring him to the attention of the club. The process of membership generally takes four or five years. For as long as three years, a candidate is a prospect and runs errands for members and does chores around the clubhouse, then the club votes on whether to extend to him probationary membership, which lasts at least a year; then all the Jokers vote on whether to accept him.

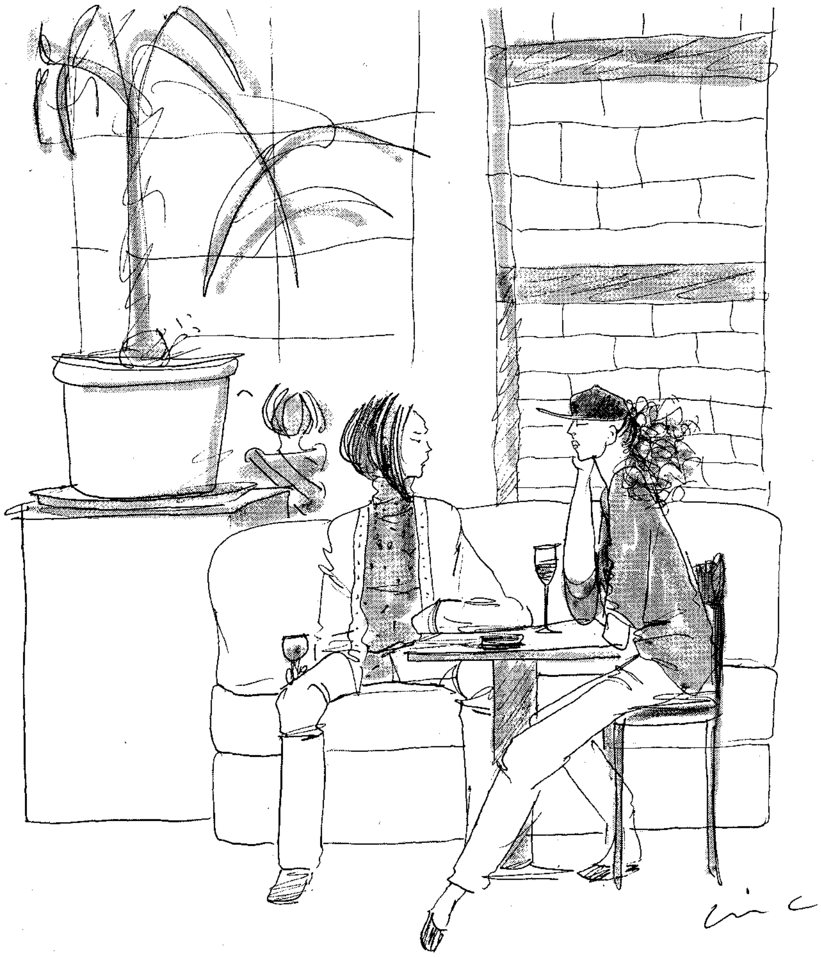
Other Jokers: "This is a unique gathering of individuals, and you have to fit in."

"You're born a Joker looking for a home, and you either go home or you don't."

A member is described as a patch-holder, or a patch. He is welcome on short notice at any of the clubhouses, and he can wear the club's colors as long as he is riding his motorcycle. He can also be beaten and expelled for stealing money from the club or motorcycle parts from another member or for showing disrespect to the club or for injecting drugs, what the Jokers call using needles. The Jokers despise junkies, because they believe that they can't be trusted.

Above all, the Jokers admire the ability to fight. Accomplishment and talent are not what they especially esteem; fearlessness is. "You don't have to be a businessman to join the Jokers, but you have to know how to fight," one of them told me. "If you don't fight, you'll turn"—become a witness against them. A Joker wishing to compliment another on his abilities as a fighter might describe him as a "barroom hooking machine." Among the Jokers, "hospitalize" is a euphemism. Its correct usage is "They put me in a cell with a child molester, and I hospitalized him."

The Jokers' emblem—their colors—is worn on the back, and consists of a downward-curving banner across the shoulders, a figure of a joker beneath it, and a rocker beneath the figure. The banner is black and says "Gypsy Joker" in curving white letters that taper at their tips, and the rocker says "U.S.A.," also in black-and-white. The rocker on



"I've seen all his short films about the rain forest. Now what?"

CASTING LOTS

She does not
walk below
my window
to see if I am not
at home.
She does not write
or call except
to say she is
in a happy state
and the way
it makes her feel,
not like I made
her feel, not like
a Seurat needle dot
whose color heart
has begun to flake,
but the way it must be
meant to be—
she is free
but I am not.

—Jay Fielden

the colors of many motorcycle clubs identifies the state where their chapter is situated. "We don't do that turf bullshit," a Joker told me. "Our turf is the United States, and we go wherever we want." The figure is a strolling joker with a cap and bells. His right hand is in his pocket and in his left he carries the bells. His suit is yellow and blue, and his boots are red. His lips are curved in a wry and enigmatic grin. He was adapted from a figure of a joker that appeared on a playing card. The figure's name is Simon. Sometimes when you ask a Joker if he knows who started the club, he says, "Simon."

I obtained an introduction to a Gypsy Joker named Murderen' Mike, who introduced me to other Jokers, named Lumpy, Smoky Joe, Ernie, Murphy, Moose, Bean, Rudy, and several whose names I didn't catch and was afraid to ask them to repeat. Murderen' Mike belongs to the chapter in Seattle. He used to be called Romeo. The homicides from which his new name derived took place one night in the nineteen-sixties and involved two men; Mike will not say any more about them except that he is the only one who knows what really happened. The members of his chapter changed his name while he was in prison serving time for the murders. He learned of it when he received a letter with his new name on the envelope. His real name is Michael Hamilton. He is stocky and barrel-chested, he has long thin hair, which has gone mostly gray, and he has a clipped beard, which follows the edges of his jaw and his lips as if it were tracing them. He has deep lines in his face that look as if they were cut with woodworking tools. His voice is low and raspy, and his speech is unhurried and terse. He often wears black. He is fifty-two, and he became a Gypsy Joker twenty-eight years ago. A Joker struck his friend with a motorcycle kickstand, and Hamilton went to the Jokers' clubhouse and kicked in the door and said, "Who's running this outfit?" Out of admiration, the Jokers exempted him from the customary apprenticeship and voted to admit him after only twenty-eight days—the briefest probationary period any Joker has ever served. Hamilton is a welder and works in a shipyard in Seattle. He is also a bounty hunter. Among his tattoos is one on his back portraying the club's colors; a cellmate in prison, another Joker, drew it for him.

I met Hamilton in Salem, Oregon. He was travelling with Lumpy, a Joker from Spokane. Lumpy looks like a long-haired, sad-eyed, half-Mexican bandit. He has a broad, round face and a wispy beard, and forearms the circumference of bowling pins. He is about five feet nine and weighs two hundred pounds. The tips of the thumb and of the first two fingers of his left hand are missing; he lost them about a year ago in an explosion.

I picked up Lumpy and Murderen' Mike at a trailer belonging to a guy named Rico, who was a friend of the president of the Seattle chapter. The reason I went to Salem was to talk to Terry Wayne Jones, who had been president of the Spokane chapter at the time of the murders. Jones is known among the Jokers as Moose. He had been in prison for a parole violation and had got out about a week before and was living at a kind of halfway house for veterans in the center of Salem. Moose barely fit in the midsized car I had rented. If he were one degree larger, he would be called Tiny. He is six feet two and weighs two hundred and sixty pounds. While serving a sentence for murder in the nineteen-seventies, he was the undefeated heavyweight boxing champion of San Quentin Prison. When I asked how he had learned to fight so well, he said, "Joining the Gypsy Jokers."

Moose joined the Jokers in 1967 and was sergeant at arms for the San Francisco chapter. The position of sergeant at arms is traditionally held by the fiercest and most formidable member of the club, and the San Francisco chapter was the club's most highly regarded. "I thought I was asked to join the Jokers because I was beautiful," he says. "But they were having the power play with the Hell's Angels at the time, and I turned out to fight everyone in the world." In 1969, he went to jail for killing a man he believed was a pimp, because the man was harassing some women in Haight-Ashbury. "I went up to put a stop to it, and I guess I stopped it too much," he said.

As a Joker, Moose kept a bottle of Jack Daniel's with him the way another sort of man keeps change in his pocket, but during his last visit to prison he joined A.A. and he says he has not taken a drink in nine months. Mike said he couldn't believe that Moose was serious about staying sober. "Jack Daniel's ain't the breakfast of champions," Moose said.

Moose took us for lunch to a sports bar near a hospital where he had an appointment with a dentist to be fitted for a new set of teeth. He had none the day we met. He has gray hair cut short and a long, full gray beard. "I just got done with ten days of ringing a bell for the Salvation Army," he said. " 'Mommy, Mommy, there's Santa Claus.' "

The waitress was a young woman, whom I took to be a college student, and it was interesting to see her abandon her professional cheeriness for a certain caution and to watch her bring an ashtray to the table after seeing Moose light a cigarette, then continue to bring fresh ones, even though she had told us when she showed us to the table that we were sitting in the "No Smoking" section. Moose asked for the burrito special and coffee. Lumpy ordered a Long Island Iced Tea and Mike had a bourbon-and-Coke.

While we waited for the food and the drinks, Moose described an encounter he had had with a policeman a few years ago: The policeman had stopped him and another Joker in a car. Moose did not say why, but the policeman arrested them. He made the other Joker lie on the ground and, after handcuffing him, began pulling on his ponytail. Moose asked the policeman to stop. The cop told Moose to fuck off. Moose broke his jaw. "The best part was—just at the last second—he saw it coming," Moose said. "He's not bulletproof anymore."

Moose then said that he had never liked Don Paradis. "It was personal between him and me," he said. I didn't intend to pursue it, but he said, "He was drinking one time and he shoved my wife, and no one does that."

Lumpy said that a few years ago he had arranged for a woman to write erotic letters to Paradis. The Jokers called the woman Neanderthal Ned. She was six foot four and weighed two hundred and eighty pounds. She thought Lumpy had described her to Paradis, but he hadn't. They wrote each other letters for a year, and even talked about marrying, but Paradis called it off when he received a picture from her.

"Did you do that as a joke?" I asked.

"Of course," Lumpy said. "I'm a Joker. If I was in the joint, though, I'd want to get sexy letters. Besides, she was a good-looking two-eighty."

"Now we're back to frames of reference," Mike said. "Einstein and relativity."

"Maybe she was two-sixty," Lumpy said.

Mike's eyebrows rose.

"She told me she could assemble and disassemble a Ferris wheel all by herself," Lumpy said.

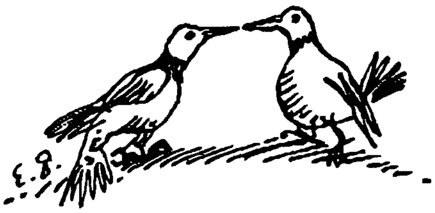
I knew that Moose had been called to Paradis's house on the night of the murders, and I asked what he had seen. "I went through the front door and right by the fireplace there I saw this body on the floor," he said. "Then I went downstairs in the basement, and this guy's on the washer and dryer—his mouth's open and his head's hanging back."

I asked how he knew for certain that the man was dead.

He looked at me for what seemed like a very long time. "I seen dead people," he said eventually. "I been on the business end of dead people. I know dead."

THE fight in which Currier died took place over several hours during the early morning of June 21, 1980. Currier was from Huntington Beach, California, and had left there a few weeks before with his fiancée, Brenda Russell, in her Volkswagen van. He had failed to pay a number of traffic tickets, and was worried about being arrested. They headed for Spokane, where Currier had lived a couple of years earlier. Currier brought with him a .44-calibre pistol, a twelve-gauge shotgun, and a .22-calibre rifle. In towns along the way, he sold a counterfeit version of hashish, which he made from corn syrup and sage. In Spokane, he intended to look up an old girlfriend, Kim Palmer.

Currier and Russell stayed several days in a Spokane motel, and then Currier found Palmer, who was working as a dishwasher at a lunch counter and occasionally selling flowers on the street. Palmer had first met Currier at a concert, when she was sixteen. Her mother says, "She brought him home and my heart sank." Palmer's mother and sister tried to discourage Palmer from seeing Currier, but she insisted. "Kim always saw herself as a rescuer," her mother says, "and I guess she saw something salvageable in Scott." Palmer dropped out of school at the end of the year and went to California with Currier. According to her mother, Currier gave Palmer a stolen credit card one day, saying that it belonged to a friend who owed him money, and asked her to buy some things with it. She was arrested and sent to a juvenile center. When she got out, her mother gave her money to come back to Spokane. She began seeing a young man her mother hoped she would marry, but in the fall before Currier arrived her boyfriend was killed in a car accident. "I felt that if she hadn't lost her boyfriend, Scott would never have had a way to get back into her life," her mother says.



Palmer put Currier and Russell up at her sister's for a while. At a park in the city, Currier met Don Paradis. Currier and Russell went to a party at Paradis's house, and the two of them eventually moved into one of the bedrooms. On June 18th, Russell went back to California to keep a doctor's appointment; she had been in a car accident, which had given rise to a lawsuit, and the court had ordered her to keep the appointment as a condition of the settlement. She left her van with Currier and rode the bus. In the days before she left, she and Currier argued about Kim Palmer; Russell had opened a door and found Currier and Palmer in bed. Currier told her that the episode meant nothing to him, and that the only reason he was paying attention to Palmer was that she had a lot of money. Palmer told her that it had simply been for old time's sake.

The fight at Paradis's house apparently began because Currier's guns were missing; he suspected that Paradis had taken them and he went with Palmer to Paradis's house to confront him.

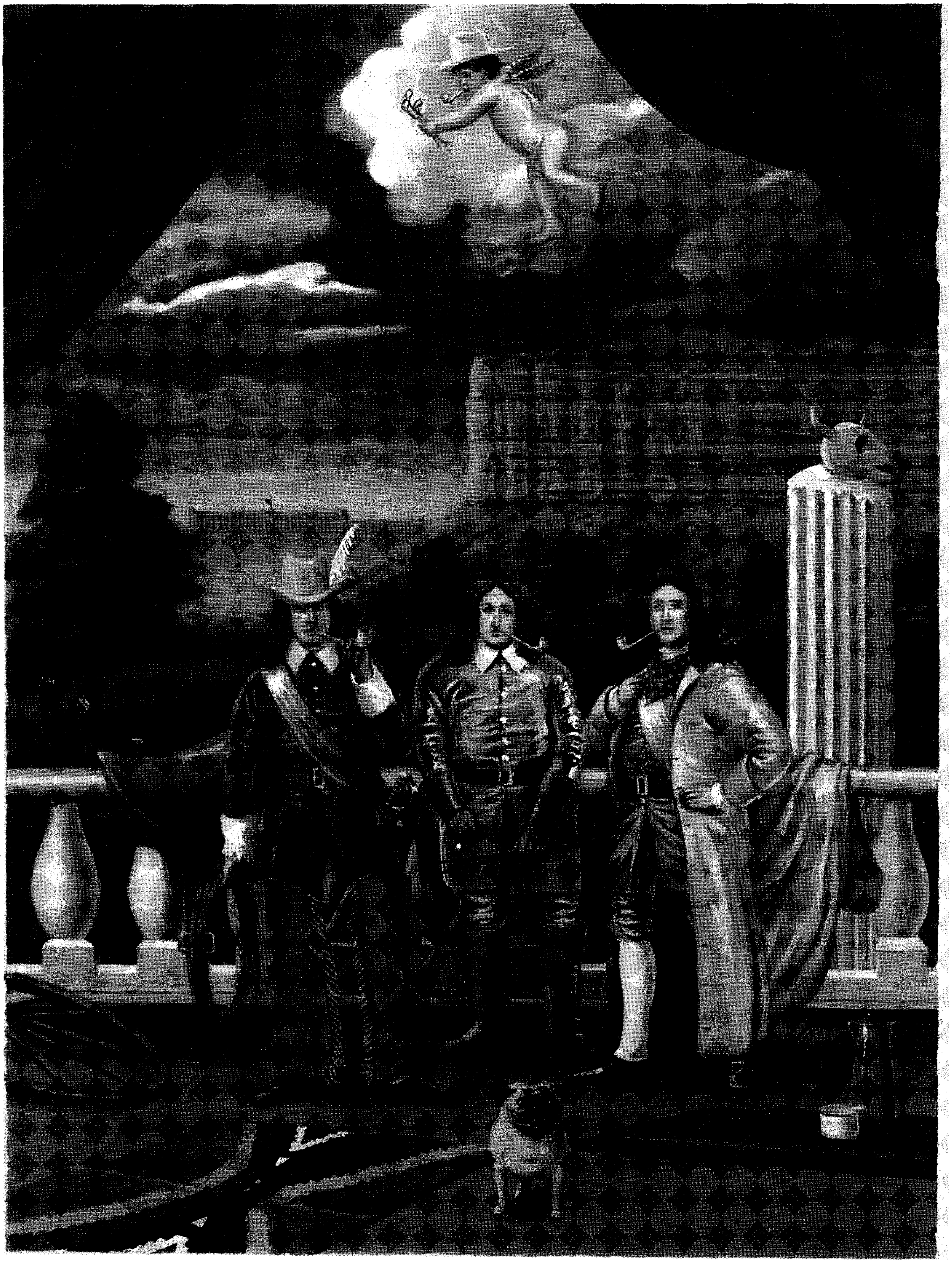
Two other significant people now appear. They are Charles Amacher, a Gypsy Joker, and his girlfriend, Roseanna Moline. Amacher was thirty-three and had recently been let out of prison on McNeil Island, in Washington. He had long dark hair, a long beard, piercing dark eyes, and twenty-six tattoos. "He was the kind of guy, if I went into a bar full of rednecks with him, I wouldn't be worrying about him handling his share of the problem," a Joker told me.

Moline had been the girlfriend of several Jokers in Portland. The Jokers called her Ramblin' Rose. She was small and trim and had blond hair and a warm and appealing smile. "She was very full of life and always had a good time," a Joker said, "until she had one drink too many and then she got alligator mouth"—meaning, he said, that she talked too much.

Amacher and Moline had hitchhiked from Oregon a few days before, so that Amacher could buy a secondhand motorcycle he knew of for sale at a shop in Post Falls. At the shop, he met Paradis.

EASEL · BY BRUCE McCALL

MARLBOROUGH COUNTRY



"A couple of suits and a skirt to see you."

• •

When Amacher was ready to ride his new bike back to Oregon with Moline, Paradis said that he would accompany them as far as Spokane. On the outskirts of the city, Amacher's bike began to fail. Paradis said that he could bring it to his house and use his tools and his garage.

When Currier and Palmer arrived, Amacher was on the back porch, stripping a motorcycle that he, Paradis, and Evans had stolen several hours before from a biker who lived near Paradis.

A complete account does not exist of the fight in which Currier died. The partial accounts differ and occasionally conflict, and over the years people have changed their stories. Moreover, it is possible that each person's version presents himself as less responsible for what happened than he actually is.

Paradis says that he and Evans were trying to find the man who owned the stolen motorcycle so that they could warn Amacher if he seemed to be heading for the house. Earlier in the day, Amacher had been so concerned over what might happen if the biker showed up that he had paced the house with a machine gun.

Gibson and his girlfriend had arrived before Currier. At about one in the morning of June 21st, Moline says, Gibson, Amacher, and Currier went into the kitchen, while Moline and Gibson's girlfriend sat in the living room with Kimberly Palmer. The television was on, but the sound was off. A tape was playing on the stereo. Palmer and Moline shared a glass of wine. Palmer said that Currier was upset about his missing guns. She also mentioned that he carried a gun in his boot.

Moline heard what she thought was a chair hitting the wall in the kitchen. One of the men came into the living room, turned up the stereo, and told the women to go into the bedrooms. Gibson's girlfriend went to one, and Palmer and Moline went to another. At one point, Moline heard Currier yelling; she has said she thought it sounded as if his lip were swollen, or else as if he had something in his mouth.

Paradis says that he spent most of the night looking for the man whose motorcycle had been stolen. He says that he came and went from his house several times and that he took some amphetamines and drank some bourbon, and was in the kitchen when the brawl began.

"Currier looked like he'd been in a scuffle," Paradis says. "There was a little blood on his face, nothing serious. Bikers, you're used to seeing that, it's not serious. He was sitting at the kitchen table, and he bent over for something in his boot, and when he did I hit him. Living a life like I had, when you see someone making a gesture like that you suspect something. He flew back into Amacher, and they started to go at it pretty good and Amacher got the worst of it. He tried to hit Currier, and I don't know if he missed and his hand went through a window or hit the wall, or Currier somehow pushed his hand through the glass, but he was cut pretty bad and was bleeding all over the place. You never jump into a fight, though, not in close quarters like that. I had been that route before, and sometimes you end up getting hit by the person you were trying to help. Mainly, I was really upset that this was going on in my house. I said, 'If you want to fight, go outside, and I want my house cleaned up.' When I left, Currier was sitting in a chair and Amacher was sitting across the table from him."

Gibson and Evans said at their trials that Paradis hit Currier with a baseball bat, or perhaps a stick. According to Evans, Currier fell to the floor, yelling. Evans said that Gibson then told him, "Igor, go out and watch the front door, don't let anybody in." Evans said that he walked back and forth in front of the house, listening to the music and the occasional sound of voices raised above it and tried to imagine what was going on inside. No one arrived. After about an hour, the house grew quiet. He said that Paradis called him into the living room. Through the door of the kitchen he saw the cowboy boots on Currier's feet and part of his pants legs. The backs of the heels were pointed at the ceiling and there was blood on the floor. Paradis, he said, told him to fetch a Joker named Unrighteous Robert, who was also called

UnBob. Evans said that he rode his motorcycle to UnBob's house, about twenty minutes away, woke up UnBob, told him that there had been a bad fight at Paradis's house, and that he should get over there right away. UnBob, he said, told him to wait at his house while he was gone. Evans said that he sat on UnBob's couch and drank a beer to calm himself. He said that he didn't know how long UnBob had been gone but that when he got back the sky was beginning to grow light. UnBob told Evans to go back to Paradis's house.

At the house, Evans said that he saw Gibson, his pants lowered, lying on top of a body on the floor in the kitchen. Evans said that he did not know whose body it was, and that he only took in the sight briefly, as he was on his way to the basement where someone was yelling. In the basement, he said, he found Currier, Amacher, and Paradis. Currier, he said, was hog-tied. He had on only his underwear. Amacher had a lawn dart in his hand. Evans said that Amacher threw the dart at Currier. Although the point of it pierced his back, he did not move.

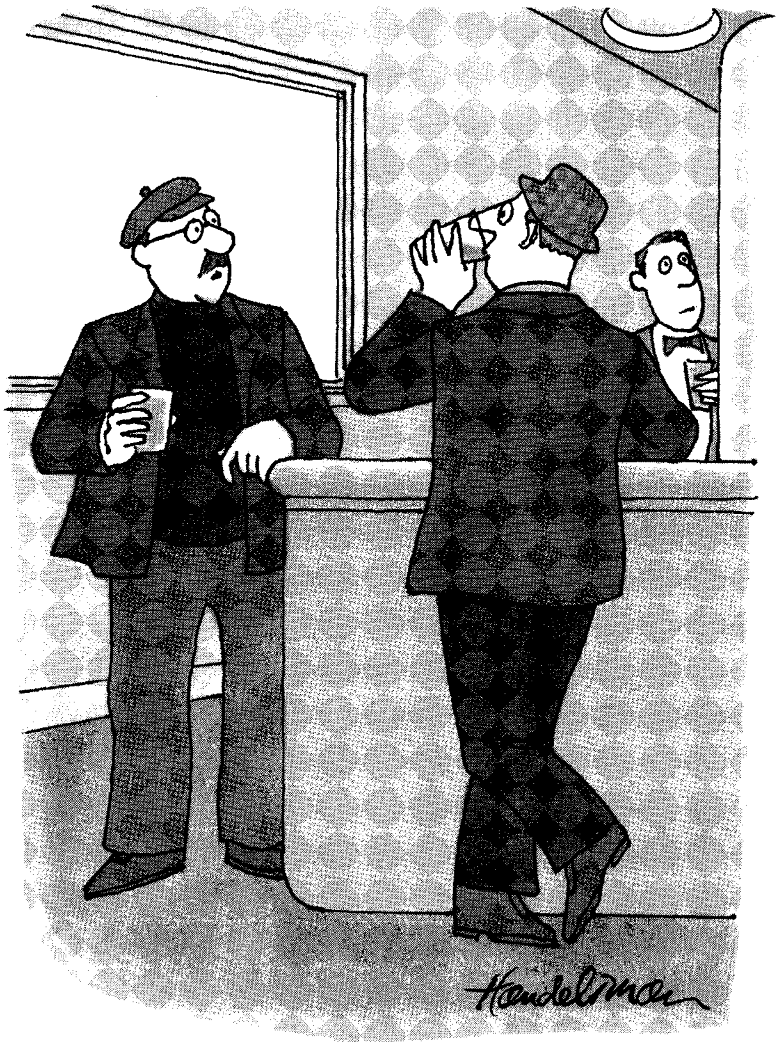
Evans now says that his testimony is unreliable. The only details he clearly recalls are Paradis hitting Currier with a stick or a bat, and Amacher throwing the lawn dart at Currier's corpse. Before his trial, he read the transcripts from all the other trials, he says, and he no longer remembered what he saw take place and what he thought he saw because he read it. Furthermore, he says that at his trial he was subject to the effects of what he describes as "a collage of drugs." He was taking Valium for anxiety, and Elavil and Tylox for pain. The source of the pain was a problem in his back and phantom pains from his left leg, which had been amputated a few years earlier, after a car ran into him while he was riding his motorcycle. He says that he would not have known that Paradis had gone if Paradis had left his house by the back door—which Paradis says he did.

Like Evans and Paradis, Gibson gives an account of the fight which has him absent from the house when Currier was murdered. At his trial, Gibson said that he left the kitchen when Paradis hit Currier. He said that he went to the bedroom where his girlfriend was and took her out to her car and told her to leave, because he was worried about what might happen—especially, he said, because he was not a Gypsy Joker. He said that when he went back into the house, Currier was in the basement and was dying or dead, and that Paradis then left. In the interest of clarity, I feel obliged to point out that all other accounts agree that the fight took place over several hours, and that Gibson's testimony that the fight lasted only long enough for him to take his girlfriend from the bedroom and out to her car must be viewed with extra skepticism. Also, the girlfriend's account does not support Gibson's. In 1982, after his and Paradis's trials, Gibson signed an affidavit saying that during his trial, "I deliberately lied in my statements about the facts so as to shift the guilt from myself to Donald M. Paradis. I did this in an attempt to save myself from the Death Penalty."

When questioning Moline in 1980 as a material witness, the police apparently did not ask her what had happened to Palmer, and she did not tell them. She told them that when she came out of the bedroom, only Amacher was still in the house. There was blood all over the floor in the kitchen, and there was blood on the walls and the curtains. She and Amacher mopped it up with a washcloth and a rug. It took about an hour. By the time they were finished, the sun was up. In the fireplace, she burned a cowboy hat that Currier had been wearing. They drove to a 7-Eleven and bought three bottles of wine, and put two dollars' worth of gas in the car.

Before they left the house, Moline saw Palmer on her back on the floor of the kitchen. Gibson was lying on top of her and appeared to be trying to have intercourse.

Paradis says that he came home early in the morning and that a Gypsy Joker



"If memory serves, the alternative to being a McGovern-nik was being a Nixon-nik."

(who has asked that his name not be used) met him at his door and said, "Don't even bother going in." The Joker said there were two bodies in the house. Paradis went in. He says that he saw Palmer's body on the floor in the kitchen. He began making phone calls. One was to a Joker named Abnormal Norman. Moose was staying with Abnormal Norman and Norman told him to get over to Paradis's house right away. Moose remained long enough to register the sight of the bodies and the impression that the people at the house seemed "all cranked up and nervous and like they'd been on a three-day fry, with Jack Daniel's thrown in."

Paradis says that after Moose left he tried to take stock of the situation. "I'm thinking, Son of a bitch," Paradis says. "I'm supposed to call the cops, say, 'Hi, this is Red Rider, I'm a Gypsy Joker, and I just got home, and there's two bodies in my house. I didn't kill them, but I found them here.'

"I went out on the front porch, and I'm trying to think what to do—my mind is racing a million miles an hour. When I come back in, somebody had put the bodies in the sleeping bags. I didn't see who got put in which bag, and I didn't notice who drove the van around to the back of the house; I just noticed it was there. We loaded the bodies into the van. Evans got in the back, with the bodies on the floor, I got in the front seat, and Gibson drove. Amacher and Moline stayed and cleaned up the house.

"The three of us take off. No plan, no one's talking. I'm too furious to talk. We end up about twenty miles away, in Idaho, back in the woods, up on something called Mellick Road, thinking, I guess, of trying to get far enough away from the house that no one can tie the bodies to us. We're climbing the hill, the van gets a flat tire. At that point, we just decided to put the bodies in the brush. We couldn't drive anywhere else with the tire, and we couldn't leave the bodies in the van, because if someone stops and looks in they'll find them. If they see the van by itself, maybe they'll just think we abandoned it.

"One body was put on my shoulder—I didn't know who it was at first. The hillside is very steep and as I was going down it I'm holding the bag at the closed end, where your feet go. The body starts slipping out of the bag, then it slipped out completely. There's a barbed-wire fence about halfway down the hill. When I came to it, I slid her under the fence and climbed through it. Then I pulled her the rest of the way through, and picked her up, and kept going. When you get to the bottom of the hill, it goes up again; I just placed her right there, face down in the leaves—I wasn't thinking face up or down—I just placed her there and put some brush over her. Then—this will sound funny to some people—but I said a prayer for her, because it was senseless that she should be dead, and I said a prayer for him, and then I went back up the hill. Evans and Gibson pushed the van over and we started walking."

That night, a heavy rain fell. It rained all night and into the next morning.

Gibson and his girlfriend left Spokane on Saturday. Paradis, Evans, Amacher, and Moline left that night. Evans went off on his own. Paradis rode his motorcycle, and Amacher and Moline drove a station wagon that belonged to Paradis. The car broke down on the outskirts of Spokane. They called a Gypsy Joker in Portland, about six hours away, and he agreed to pick them up. The three waited for him in the lot of an abandoned gas station.

Around five in the morning, the clerk of a motel about a block from Paradis's

COLD

You're almost fifty. Nightlong
your stubble grows white
against my throat. We unwrap

in an attic that smells of tar.
When you push inside, you keep
your eyes closed
as if there's no through way.

These blue corridors, mazy
stairlets, have lost us. We run
from one carved pub to another,

sneezing under high ceilings,
talking magic wands: your father—
proud of you,
his voice a surprise through

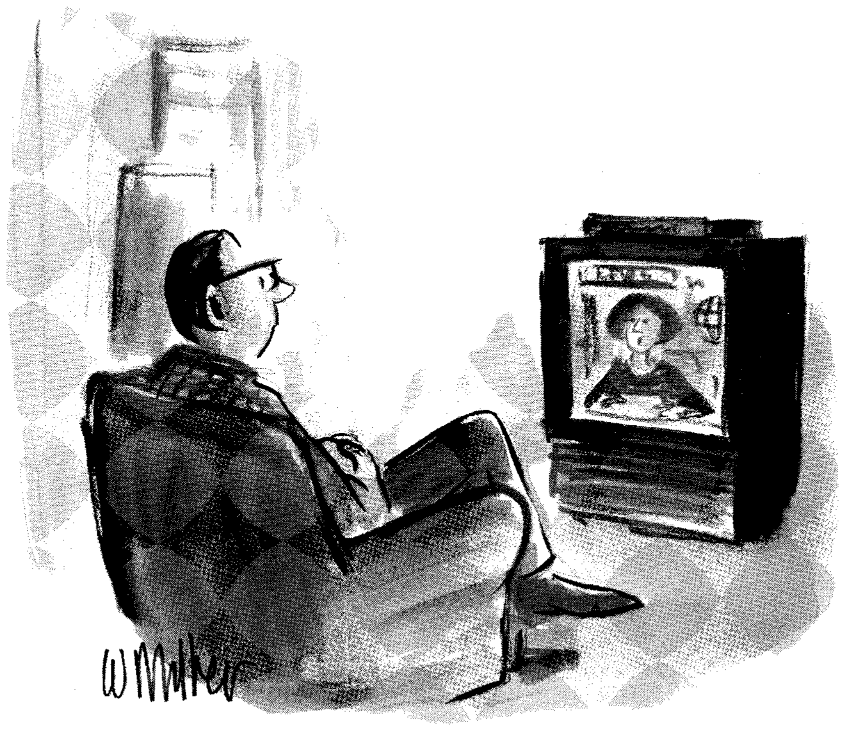
a voice on a train. Plus
the dottiness of believing
your Church.

Talking? I listen.
I hold you, stare
at the bathroom strip-glow,
one aureole of hi-glisten ivory

up the half-shut door.
This is me adrift, spindrift,
in your sleep. Drowning in fog.

Learning the unearthly start of ferns,
their brittle browning back,
the many ways of leaving
your town. Where did we go?

—RUTH PADEL



"This just in! A fifteen-man nineteen-forties swing-era-style big band was discovered intact today in Brno, Czechoslovakia."

• •

house looked out the window and saw flames through the branches of the trees. Someone had set the house on fire; no one has ever discovered who did it.

A deputy arrived at the abandoned gas station and asked Paradis and Amacher and Moline who they were. Later, the police returned and arrested Paradis for first-degree murder, and Amacher and Moline as material witnesses. Paradis, Gibson, and Evans had been stopped by the police in Post Falls and asked to identify themselves. After the police found the bodies in the hills, they linked the three of them to the bodies, and then the Spokane police identified Paradis as the tenant of the house that had been set on fire.

Gibson was arrested a couple of days later in California, driving a car, with his girlfriend. Evans escaped and stayed lost for six years.

In the remains of the house, the police found the rug that had been used as a mop to clean up the blood. It was rolled up, and inside it were a pair of women's underpants, a broken stick, a piece of string, a piece of terry cloth like the one that had been wrapped around the end of the sleeping bag, Currier's belt buckle, and the lawn dart.

PARADIS, Gibson, and Amacher were tried in Washington in 1980 for Currier's murder. All three were acquitted, mainly because the prosecution had no one to describe what had happened at the house. As the man apparently least involved, Paradis could have tried to negotiate a lesser charge in exchange for information or testimony, but didn't. Then Paradis, Gibson, and Evans were charged with killing Kimberly Palmer in Idaho. The prosecution, led by D. Marc Haws, developed the theory that Palmer had been alive when she came to Idaho and that Paradis, Gibson, and Evans had killed her beside the creek where she was found.

Paradis and Gibson were tried in Coeur d'Alene, about eight miles east of Post Falls. At the time, about twenty thousand people lived there. Very few of them found anything amusing in the fondness displayed by the Gypsy Jokers for two bars in the center of town.

Haws had planned to try Paradis and Gibson together. According to Paradis, one morning during jury selection, the two defendants were sitting in a room in the courthouse. Paradis says that Gibson told him to save himself by testifying against him.

"I told him he was out of his mind," Paradis says. "The prosecutor would have a field day with me, because it was hearsay evidence. I wasn't at the house, I didn't know what had happened. I said, 'Why can't you just get up there and tell the goddam truth?' "

Gibson made no reply. He wrote something on a pad of paper, then tore the page from the pad and put it in an envelope addressed to the judge, a man named Gary Haman. Paradis says he waited until Gibson was distracted, then tore the next page from the pad. He gave it to his lawyer, who rubbed the broad side of a pencil across the impressions and raised the text.

Gibson had written:

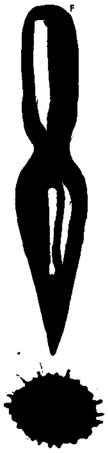
> June 5, 1981
>
> DEAR JUDGE HAMAN,
>
> I hope this letter will explain what I wanted to let you know. I have written a letter to the prosecutor in Washington telling them that the death of Kim Palmer was done in Washington and that I wanted to seek extradition back there to stand trial.
>
> There is one other point I would like to make. Don Paradis was not involved in any way, he is totally innocent of her death before or after it happened. I hope you will be able to do something for me on this matter.

After receiving the letter, the Judge decided to give Paradis and Gibson separate trials. Gibson was tried first and convicted and sentenced to death. Then Paradis was tried and convicted and sentenced to death.

PARADIS'S trial was held in the Kootenai County courthouse in Coeur d'Alene. The citizens who attended heard only five days of testimony. One of the jurors recalls that a contingent of Gypsy Jokers took seats in the back of the room and unnerved the jurors and were asked by Judge Haman to leave. They went outside and looked in the windows and the Judge sent the bailiff to disperse them. A detail of the trial that many observers recall is the smell that spread through the small courtroom when the bailiffs unrolled the sleeping bag that Currier had been found in.

Prosecutor Haws began his opening remarks by saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, there is no eyewitness that is going to come in here and take the stand and tell you about the murder of

Kimberly Palmer. The best eyewitness in a murder case is dead."



Palmer had been brought to Idaho with Currier's body, Haws said. Paradis, Gibson, and Evans threw Currier into the woods. "The Volkswagen van maybe went out of control and went into a slow rollover on the bank," he went on. "At that moment, these three men had a terrified young lady on their hands. They couldn't just release her and let her walk free—she knew too much. They couldn't go walking back down into civilization with her as a hostage—it would never work. In desperation, Kimberly Palmer managed to break free and run for her life down through the woods. As she went down through the foliage, clutching her shirt under her arm, in the middle of this dense forest she suddenly came upon this three-strand barbwire fence that was three foot tall, she was five foot tall, no way she was going to go over that. With her instinct, her softball practice"—Palmer had been a member of a softball team—"whatever, she tried to go under that fence and sustained very superficial scrapings on her chest and belly. In the process of doing so she snagged the rear of her pants.

"By the time she got clear of the fence, her assailants were upon her, and there beside the creek, in order to irrevocably silence Kimberly Anne Palmer, hands were wrapped around her neck that shattered the cricoid cartilage.

"Perhaps forgotten in the moment of killing, heat of killing, as she went down she landed on top of one of the defendants' hat. And then in her last instinctive gasps for air through her damaged throat, she drew not oxygen but water.

"These are the facts which will be shown to you at trial and which will then lawfully require your verdict of guilty of murder in the first degree."

When it was the moment for Paradis's lawyer to face the jury, he might have said, "Ladies and gentlemen, Kimberly Palmer did not die in Idaho. The case that the prosecution is presenting is invented. Several eyewitnesses will describe seeing Palmer's body at a house in Spokane, Washington; some of them will tell you that Don Paradis was not present when the murder took place. No one will say that he was. Like Scott Currier, Ms. Palmer was already dead when the van arrived in Idaho, let alone entered the hills above Post Falls. Kimberly Palmer died at South 24 Dearborn Street, in Spokane, Washington, early on the morning of June 21, 1980. Consequently, Idaho has no jurisdiction whatsoever in this matter."

The lawyer, however, made no such statements in his opening remarks.

THE trial seemed to turn on three elements, all of them harmful to Paradis. These elements were his court-appointed lawyer; the entry into evidence of pictures of Currier's corpse; and the testimony of the medical examiner, William Brady.

To take them in order: Paradis asked to be represented by Roger Peven, the attorney from Spokane who had got him acquitted at his trial for Currier's murder, in Washington. Instead, Judge Haman appointed a lawyer who, it turned out, had a conflict that made him unable to take the case. Haman then appointed a Coeur d'Alene lawyer named William Brown, a man in early middle age. Brown had been a policeman for twenty-two years in New York and New Jersey. Then he attended law school at Columbia, and after he graduated he moved to Idaho. When Brown was appointed to represent Paradis, in April of 1981, he had been a lawyer for seven months. He had never represented a client charged with murder. He had never defended a client charged with any felony. He had never appeared before a jury in a criminal case.

Furthermore, after arriving in Idaho Brown had applied for a position with the Coeur d'Alene police and had been hired as a reserve officer and park patrolman. He was also appointed a deputy in the Kootenai County sheriff's department—the county in which Paradis was being tried. Marc Haws, the prosecutor, knew that Brown was a Coeur d'Alene policeman. Judge Haman knew that Brown was a Coeur d'Alene policeman. According to Paradis, however, Brown did not tell him about his affiliation with the Coeur d'Alene police, and Judge Haman did not reveal to Paradis that he had appointed as his attorney a Coeur d'Alene policeman. Paradis says that he found out in 1993, when he read a story by David Bond, a reporter for the Coeur d'Alene *Press*, who had called the Police Department on a hunch and asked if Brown had been a member. By this time, Brown was dead. He died in 1990, of cancer. He represented Paradis through several unsuccessful appeals, until 1986. That year, he signed an affidavit acknowledging his shortcomings as Paradis's attorney. In it, he takes eighteen paragraphs to note them and all the things that he failed to do on Paradis's behalf: for example, to challenge as a member of the jury a woman who said several times before the trial that Paradis was probably guilty and would have to prove that he was innocent; to ask the jurors what they thought about bikers; to challenge medical testimony that he believed was false; and to ask for help from Peven, the lawyer who had got Paradis acquitted in Washington, even though Peven had offered it.

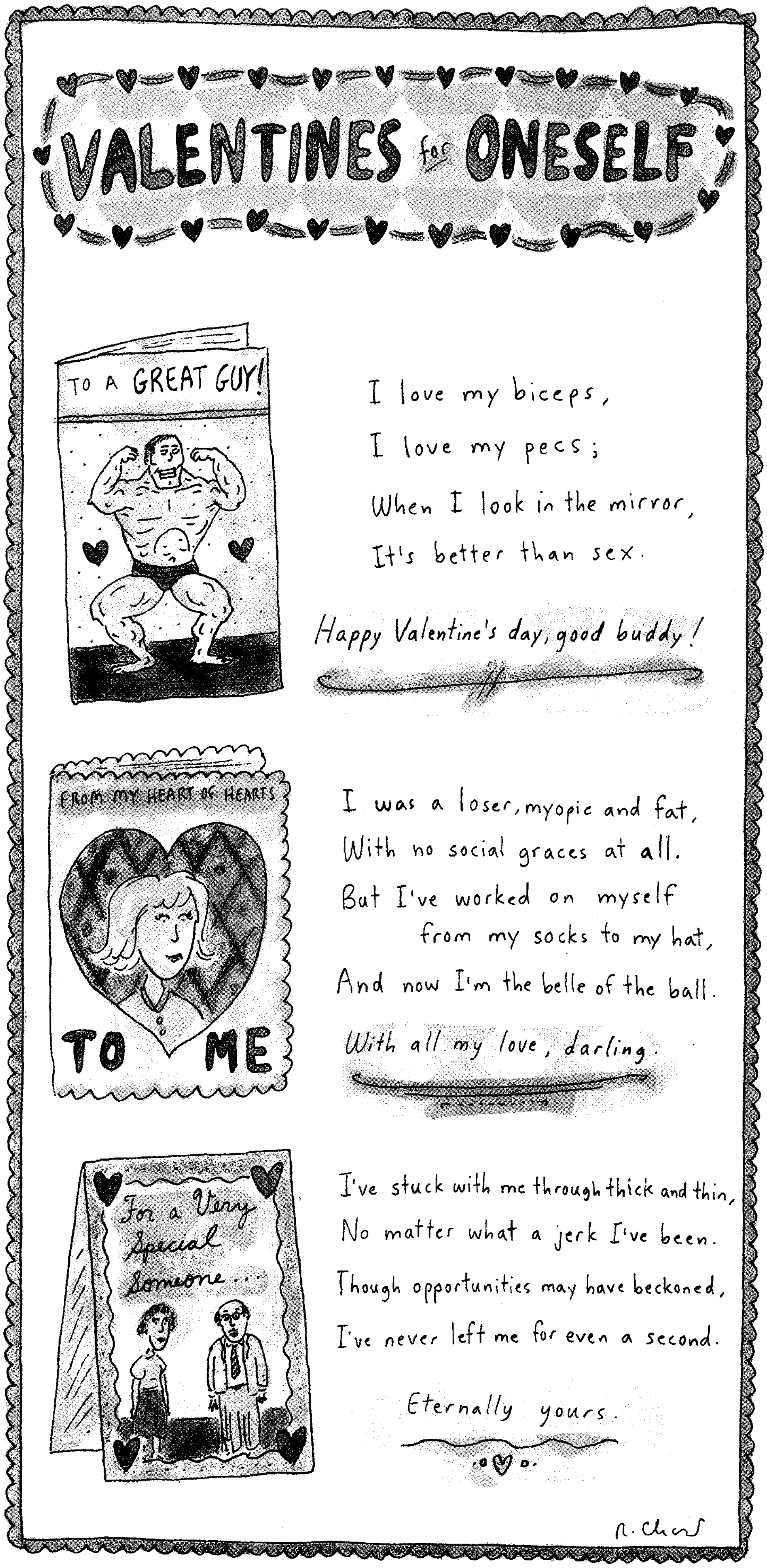
Paradis says that he asked Brown to have Roseanna Moline tell the jury what had happened to Palmer at his house. Brown, though, called a woman named Aera Beaver to provide an alibi for Paradis for the night and early morning of the murders—someone, that is, who said, in effect, that while Paradis was being identified from the picture on his license by the police in Post Falls he was actually somewhere else. Aera Beaver told the police a few days after the murders that she had spent the night before the night of the murders with Paradis. At his trial, she said it was the night of the murders. At another time, she had been confused about whether it was the night of the murders or the night before.

The six people other than Paradis who say they saw Palmer's corpse in Spokane are Tom Gibson, Larry Evans, Charles Amacher, Roseanna Moline, Terry Wayne Jones, and the Gypsy Joker who met Paradis at his door and has asked that his name not be mentioned. Brown did not have any of them testify—he said that he was unable to find Moline, and he was concerned that Gibson might say that Paradis had hit Currier. Nor did he ever tell the jury that he believed Spokane was where Palmer actually died.

The second element of the trial that went against Paradis was the introduction by Haws of pictures of Currier's corpse. In 1983, the Idaho Supreme Court would rule 3–2 against Paradis's appeal of his conviction and sentence, and the dissenting judges would begin their opinion of his trial in Coeur d'Alene by saying, "The record before us is literally fraught with error at every stage of the proceedings." What they were mainly referring to was the photographs. The judge preparing the opinion wrote that the photographs had "inflamed" the jury members and caused them to feel a prejudice against Paradis. Moreover, Paradis had already stood trial for killing Currier and been acquitted and should not have been forced to in essence defend himself twice against the same charge. The photographs were so disturbing that the Idaho Supreme Court judge felt that they had affected even Judge Haman's equanimity. He concluded:

> Although possessed of the highest regard for the sentencing judge in this case, I am brought to the conclusion that he may, as with many of us, have little or no regard for motorcycle gangs. I am brought to the conclusion that such is reflected in his . . . forcing Paradis into a trial which could not be fair. I am brought to the conclusion that the photographs of the murdered Scott Currier, brought into this case where the charge was the murder of Kimberly Palmer, are so gruesome that the judge in all likelihood was himself affected thereby—even though perhaps not conscious that this was so. In all candor, I admit that had I been a juror in this case, the photographs of Scott Currier's body would have done far more than prove that he was dead, and that Paradis had a motive for killing Kimberly Palmer or having her killed. Had I been a sentencing judge, I do not believe that I could have ceased being a person at the same time, and would again concede that those photographs might very well have affected my judgment.

The final element of the trial that threw the jury against Paradis was the testimony of Dr. Brady, who had performed the autopsies of Currier and Palmer. Brady noted in his autopsy report that Palmer's lungs were heavy and full of blood and that they also contained fluid. The fluid, he said, was a result of pulmonary edema; edema is a common condition of death whereby pressure in the capillaries forces water from the blood into the passages of the lungs. In the weeks before Paradis and Gibson went to trial, Haws and Brady discussed the prosecution's theory of the murder—the van turned over, Palmer got free, ran down the hillside, and was caught and strangled and left to die with her face in the creek. Brady said that the weight of Palmer's lungs might be con-


VALENTINES for ONESELF
TO A GREAT GUY!
I love my biceps,
I love my pecs;
When I look in the mirror,
It's better than sex.
Happy Valentine's day, good buddy!
FROM MY HEART OF HEARTS
TO ME
I was a loser, myopic and fat,
With no social graces at all.
But I've worked on myself
from my socks to my hat,
And now I'm the belle of the ball.
With all my love, darling.
For a Very Special Someone...
I've stuck with me through thick and thin,
No matter what a jerk I've been.
Though opportunities may have beckoned,
I've never left me for even a second.
Eternally yours.

336
WOODMAN

• •

sistent with her having inhaled water from the creek. Brady could not say under oath that she had, because he had found no actual evidence of creek water in Palmer's lungs. Instead, he gave his testimony in the form of an opinion.

This exchange took place on Day 5 of Paradis's trial:

> HAWS: Let me ask you one last question, Dr. Brady. How do you think Kimberly Palmer died?
>
> BRADY: Kimberly Anne Palmer, I believe, was strangled. I believe she was strangled, and shortly afterwards aspirated some amount of water during her terminal—during her last moments, with her last breath, I think, she inhaled some water.

What another pathologist might have told the jury at Paradis's trial is that while a person is being strangled, blood continues to arrive in the lungs but is no longer pumped out; the blood dams up, and the lungs become heavy. Or that, although Brady thought otherwise, Palmer's lungs were no heavier than those you would expect to find in someone who had been strangled. Or that if Palmer had inhaled water from the creek there would likely be pieces of twigs or grass or bark or some kind of particulate matter in her mouth or her throat or her lungs, but that Brady had found none with his naked eye, and none when he examined sections of her lungs under a microscope. Or that during Brady's autopsy he had identified the fluid in her lungs as pulmonary edema, and that nothing in his examination indicated that the fluid was water from a creek. Or that if Palmer had inhaled water from the creek there might be water in her stomach, and he found none. Or that if Palmer had died face down in the creek and lay there for as long as she had, the blood might have settled in the front of her lungs and not moved again, and that the blood's having settled in the back of her lungs was a likely indication that Palmer had died on her back.

There is another possible complication to Brady's testimony that has never been raised. Paradis says that when he left Palmer's body in the draw, no water was running through it. He says that he had no idea what the police were talking about when they described her body as lying in a creek. If he is correct, the water would not have begun to flow through the creek until that night, approximately twelve hours or more later, when enough rain had fallen to create runoff from the hills. I knocked on the door of Ruth Jones's house. An old man answered. When I said that I was writing a story about Don Paradis, he told me to get off his property. He allowed me one question. I asked if the creek up the hill always ran, and he said, "No, there's lots of times when it's dry."

Larry Evans was captured in Blue Springs, Missouri, in 1986 and returned to Coeur d'Alene for trial. He appeared in court in a wheelchair. Against Evans, Brady essentially repeated the testimony he had given against Paradis about the fluid in Palmer's lungs. When he was asked by Evans's lawyer (as he might have been by Brown) if he had an opinion "to a reasonable medical probability, not proof, not absolute, just probability, that the edema in the lungs was caused by the aspiration of water," Brady said "No." Furthermore, Brady agreed that he could not say for certain that Palmer had inhaled any water at all. The jurors acquitted Evans. They did not want to, they said afterward. They felt that Evans had been involved, but it was not clear to them that Palmer had been killed in Idaho.

THE prosecution in Paradis's trial told the jury that Kimberly Palmer, nineteen, had been alive when she came to Idaho that morning, that she had escaped from Paradis and Gibson and Evans, and that they had chased her, caught her, strangled her, and left her face down in the water. No one ever testified that she had been sexually violated. In support of the argument that justice is approximate, I offer the following recollection of one of the two jurors I spoke with:

> I remember every bit of the testimony. When you get into something that serious—with somebody's life at stake—you listen real clearly; what they say goes into your brain and you don't forget it. The beautiful little girl—she was only sixteen. I remember everything about how she was left that night up on the mountain with those motorcyclers. They went up there in the evening and took food and guns and sleeping bags, and they had wrapped her boyfriend's body in a rug or something, and carried him through town—they were *seen!* Then one of them raped her. They found semen and everything on her jeans and stuff. They partied all night and then they killed her in the morning and put her head in the creek so she couldn't be a witness against them.
>
> Paradis came into the courtroom in a beautiful beige suit—all made up to impress—but they handed us pictures of what he looked like before the trial. Short and stocky and fat—very repulsive. He just sat there like a lump, he'd never move at all. I had to stare at that face for two weeks, and I got to the point where I couldn't stand to look at him, I wanted to gag.
>
> The whole thing was like living in a sewer. I have never heard of people who lived like they did, and the *molls!* The color photographs of the autopsy was a terrible thing to have to look at. Very, very bad. And the decadence of this man. If ever there was a man that was guilty, it was

him; it was a cut-and-dry thing once you heard all the evidence. We knew it right away.

His lawyer said that Paradis had been a member of a church. I couldn't imagine him being a member of a church, even sitting in a pew. He's just a sociopath, a sleazeball. A loser all his life. I don't know how people like that were raised. Probably not very well. I don't think people like that were probably raised very well at all.

The courts that have heard Paradis's appeals have continued to credit the theory of the murder put forth by Haws and Brady. To undo this would require a new trial, which Paradis has asked for several times and been refused. The appeals that he has made fall into two categories. The first began in 1984, and involves constitutional issues ranging from whether or not the death penalty is appropriate punishment for Paradis to defense claims that the judge considered evidence that Paradis had no chance to respond to (Gibson's letter, for example); that Judge Haman, in having sentenced Gibson to death for the same crime, had a prejudice against Paradis; that Paradis had an ineffective lawyer; and that the evidence at the trial was insufficient to convict him. This category became defunct on January 17th, when the Supreme Court ruled against Paradis. So far, no court has heard all the evidence assembled since the trial, and what the courts have heard has not been seen as sufficient to satisfy the higher standard of proof that an appeal requires. The second category is based on the claim of innocence, which was raised in an Idaho court in 1989, and his lawyer's conflict of interest as a police officer. A final ruling has not yet been delivered—the delay may be partly a result of the judge's waiting for the resolution of the constitutional issues—but it is expected any day now. If the judge rules in Paradis's favor, he will receive a hearing. Before leaving office, in January, Governor Cecil D. Andrus wrote a letter on behalf of Paradis to the Commission of Pardons and Parole. He had been asked to make a recommendation that Paradis's sentence be changed to life imprisonment, so that his lawyers would have more time to press appeals, and he said that he felt that he couldn't. "If the man is guilty," he wrote, "the sentence should be carried out. If he is not guilty, he should then either be exonerated or tried on a lesser charge as the court might determine.

"The reason for this letter is that I believe it is apparent that Mr. Paradis did not have adequate legal counsel and that facts in the case either were not considered or have come to light long after he was sentenced."

If Palmer was not killed in Idaho, then Gibson's case must also be reconsidered.

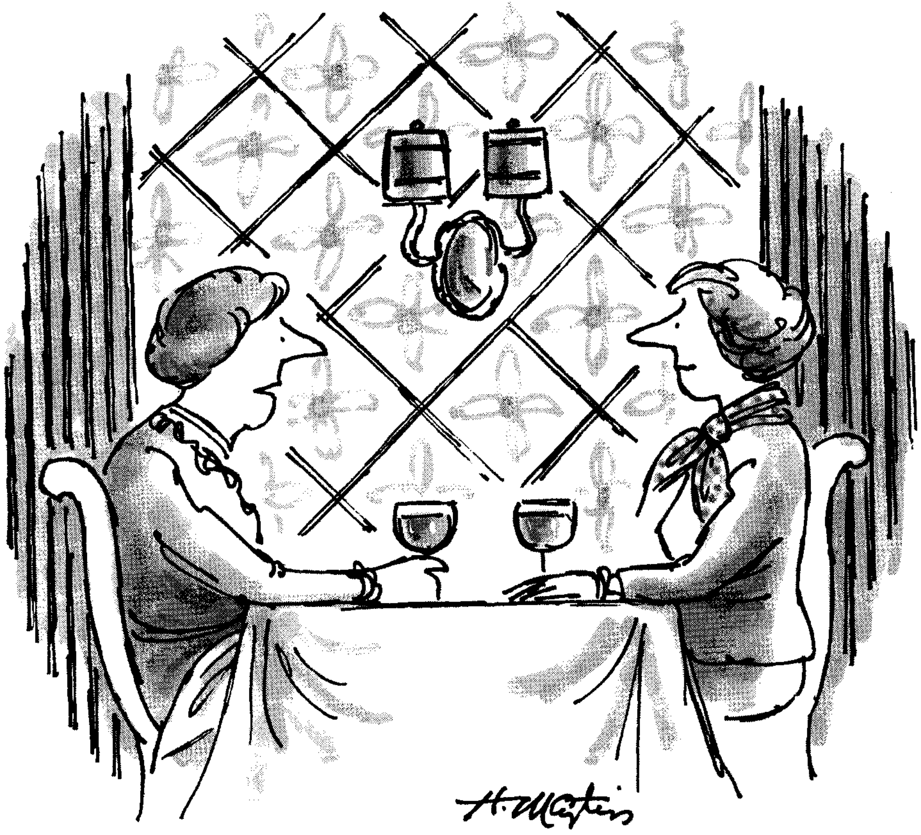
ROSEANNA MOLINE did not describe what happened to Palmer until 1982. At a hearing held for the purpose of considering a motion by Paradis and his lawyer for a new trial, she said that while she was sitting in the bedroom with Palmer they heard Gibson say from the living room, "Kim, come out and you can take your old man home now." Palmer picked up her purse, rose from the bed, and walked toward the door. Moline followed her. When Palmer stepped through the door, Gibson "grabbed her from the front by surprise," Moline said. Palmer dropped her purse. Moline looked down and saw Palmer's feet rise from the carpet. "I heard her choke," Moline said. "She made a horrible noise."

Gibson, at his trial, said that Larry Evans killed Palmer. Gibson said that to keep Palmer from leaving the house he had hit her hard enough with his fist that he knocked her out. He said that he checked her pulse and left her lying on the floor in the kitchen. He went into the living room to turn down the stereo, and when he came back, he said, Larry Evans was strangling her. Gibson says that he saw her face turn blue.

In January of 1985, David Bond, the reporter for the Coeur d'Alene *Press*, received a phone call from a man named Harley Brueck, who identified himself as a chaplain who made visits to Gibson. He said that Gibson had described to him Palmer's murder and that he had persuaded Gibson to tell what he knew. Brueck told Bond that Gibson would call him.

Two nights later, Gibson told Bond what Moline had told the hearing—that he had killed Palmer by strangling her. He now says that he may have killed Palmer when he struck her or Evans may have strangled her, although all other accounts agree that Evans was not in the house when Palmer died.

John Luster, who was helping repre-



"Harlan's reached the age when, after a little afternoon nap, he takes a little stroll, has a little drink, eats a little supper, watches a little TV, and calls it a day a little after ten."

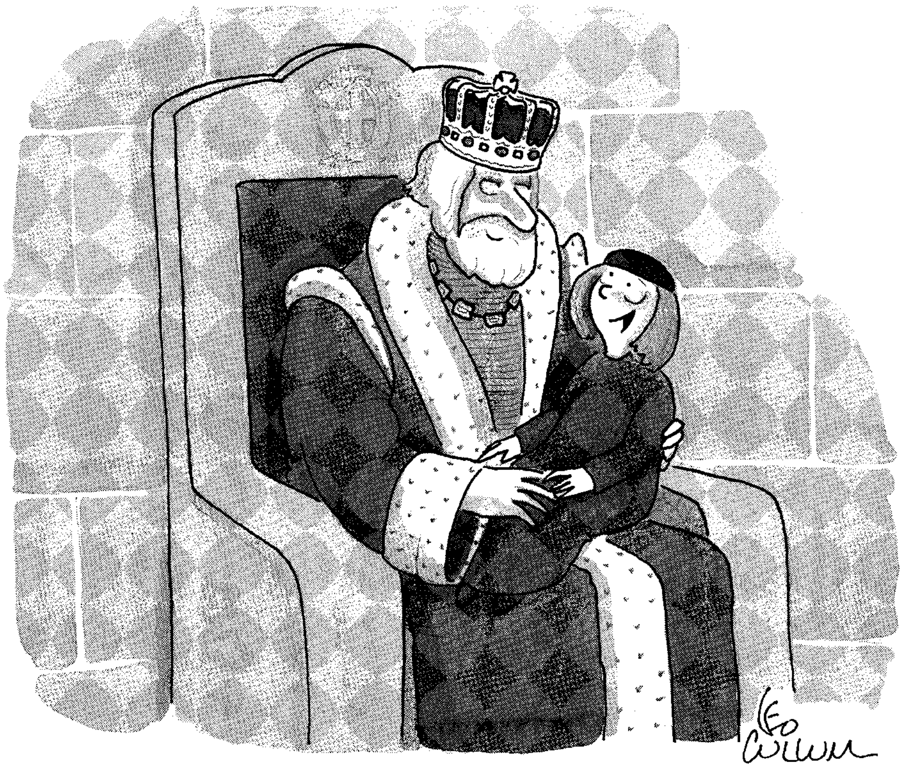
sent Paradis in 1985 and is now a magistrate in Coeur d'Alene, read Bond's article describing Gibson's confession. To confirm it, he went to visit Amacher, who was in prison in California. Amacher read the article "carefully," according to Judge Luster, then said that Gibson's account was accurate. He also repeated what Gibson had told Judge Haman before his trial and said on other occasions: that Paradis had not been at the house when Palmer was murdered. Nor, he added, had he been there when Currier was killed. Luster asked Amacher who killed Currier, and Amacher said, "I wasted the dude."

ONE considers an abundance of evidence in Paradis's favor—the accounts of Gibson, Amacher, and Moline, who say that Paradis was not at his house when Palmer was killed; the absence of anyone who says that he was; the absence of any indication of creek water in Palmer's lungs; Gibson's confession and Moline's account of Palmer's death; the six people besides Paradis who say they saw her body in Spokane; the blood in the back of her lungs, which suggests that she died on her back, and not face down in a creek; the far more thorough cross-examination of Brady at Evans's trial than at Paradis's. One considers all this before one arrives at a final piece of evidence that appears to be discordant with the prosecution's theory. This is the cut in Palmer's crotch. Because the cut showed no evidence of bleeding or healing, it is highly likely that it was made after she died. Dr. Brady testified that he would expect such a cut to bleed if it had been made anywhere from half an hour after death to two hours after. Dr. Charles S. Hirsch, the New York City chief medical examiner, to whom I gave a copy of Brady's autopsy report, says that it is difficult to be precise about time with a wound of this kind. "With a bloodless cut, though," he says, "the closer you get to the time of death, the more likely it is that there will be bleeding. The further you get, the less likely it is." I also gave a copy of the autopsy report to Dr. Elliot Gross, a former New York City chief medical examiner, and asked him about the timing of the cut. "The description of the wound in the report," he said, "is consistent with the wound's having been inflicted more than half an hour after death." Ruth Jones, who described Paradis, Gibson, and Evans walking past her house in the Idaho hills, estimated that perhaps as many as thirty minutes elapsed between when she saw the van go by and when the men returned. The distance from Mrs. Jones's house to where the bodies were found is a little more than a third of a mile. If the prosecutor, Haws, is correct, the three had half an hour to drive up the hill from Mrs. Jones's house, dump Currier's body, chase Palmer and throttle her, roll the van, disperse its contents, collect themselves, and walk a third of a mile down the hill. All this is possible. However, it does not seem to allow for the wound, since, according to the medical examiners, Paradis, Gibson, and Evans would likely have had to wait at least half an hour after strangling Palmer before making the cut; or even, perhaps, an hour or two. Otherwise, the cut would have shown evidence of bleeding or healing, and it didn't. Moreover, her jeans would have absorbed her blood; they were tested in a laboratory belonging to the state and no trace of blood was found.

The prosecution believes that the cut has no significance. They say that it may have been made by "ragged sticks . . . in this environment," or that she may have caught herself on the barbed-wire fence as she tried to slide under it. They say also that the cut might have occurred during a post-mortem sexual assault. Paradis's lawyers believe that the cut must have been made in Spokane, when her jeans were cut, shortly before Gibson was seen by Evans and Moline on top of Palmer's corpse.

Along with the rest of the evidence, the cut appears to suggest that Palmer was not killed in the hills in Idaho. In addition to the autopsy report, I gave Dr. Hirsch all of the photographs of Palmer's corpse that have been entered as evidence at Paradis's trials and hearings. After reviewing them and the report, he said, "Everything I've seen here is consistent with her being killed somewhere else and being dumped, and nothing indicates she died in Idaho." If Palmer was not killed in the hills above Post Falls, it is difficult to conceive of an explanation that would place her death in Idaho at all, considering that six people other than Paradis have said they saw her corpse in Spokane, Washington.

Tom Gibson has described Kimberly Palmer's murder. Charles Amacher and Roseanna Moline have said that his description is accurate. Moline has taken



"Tell me again, Dad, how you started in the mailroom."

two polygraph tests and passed both. She was asked if she had made up her account of seeing Gibson choke Palmer, if she was lying when she said she saw Gibson having intercourse with Palmer on the kitchen floor, if Paradis was present when Currier and Gibson were fighting, and if Paradis was present at his house in Spokane when Palmer was choked.

PARADIS has served fourteen years in prison, nearly all of them in isolation on death row, harsher terms than he would likely have been given for trying to dispose of two corpses to conceal the evidence of murder. He is now represented by an attorney named Edwin S. Matthews, Jr., who grew up in Coeur d'Alene and went to Harvard and to law school at Yale and is a corporate lawyer and a partner at Coudert Brothers, a firm in New York City. Matthews has been assisted by William L. Mauk, an attorney in Boise. Nine years ago, Matthews called the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense and Educational Fund, which monitors death-penalty cases in the United States, and volunteered. He was offered a choice between a case in Louisiana and one in Idaho.

"When the Fund mentioned this case," he says, "they added, 'By the way, this man might be innocent.' I grew up in Idaho, and I really appreciated its purity, its natural beauty, and the motivations of its people, and the idea that someone who was innocent could be convicted and killed there I found nearly impossible to believe. I have since learned that it's extremely possible."

A few days ago, Paradis called. I asked how he was, and he said what he always says, "Still alive." We talked, briefly, about the end approaching. "I sleep good at night," he said, "because I have a peaceful conscience. I did not kill anyone; I did not try to have anyone killed; I wasn't even there when anyone *was* killed. My only crime was stupidity in getting rid of the bodies."

Without first considering the effort it must cost him, I said that I was impressed by his poise. He said, "You don't believe sitting in this jail thinking about how I'm going to die for something I didn't do is cruel and unusual punishment?" He went on, "I want to be killed like a man. I'm told I have a choice between lethal injection and the firing squad, and I'm not sure if I do, but I know I don't want to die on some table like a lost dog in the pound. I want to go standing up."

UNBOB was shot through a door by his wife, whom he was in the habit of beating. Abnormal Norman fell out of a car in Chicago. Their pictures are in the Memory Case in the clubhouse in Portland. Amacher died two years ago, of a heart attack, in prison. By then he had been expelled from the Jokers—he had become a heroin addict—so his picture does not appear beside the others.

On the inside of one of Moose's enormous forearms, he has a simple tattoo:

J
F
F
J

Joker Forever Forever Joker. Paradis is the only Joker on death row. Moose says that if he were ever set free he would have to face discipline at the hands of the Jokers for involving their name in a crime against a woman, something that Moose says the Jokers consider cowardly and despicable. Murderen' Mike and Lumpy say that Palmer's death had nothing to do with Paradis: Gibson—who remains on death row—is to blame, and while they would wring his neck, or worse, if they could, they would welcome Paradis back to the Jokers. Smoky Joe says of Paradis, "He observed the code," meaning that he has put up so far with fourteen years in prison with his life at risk in order not to betray another biker.

There is a last irony to Paradis's circumstances. Three men were tried for Currier's murder in 1980—Paradis, Amacher, and Gibson. Amacher killed Currier, and Gibson was present, according to witnesses, who also agree that Paradis apparently wasn't there. Paradis had the strongest reason to separate himself from the others and to become a witness for the State in exchange for a lesser charge or immunity, and didn't. When the moment arrived for someone to testify for him and explain what had happened, he had no one to help him at all. ♦

SHOWCASE

SUZY PARKER

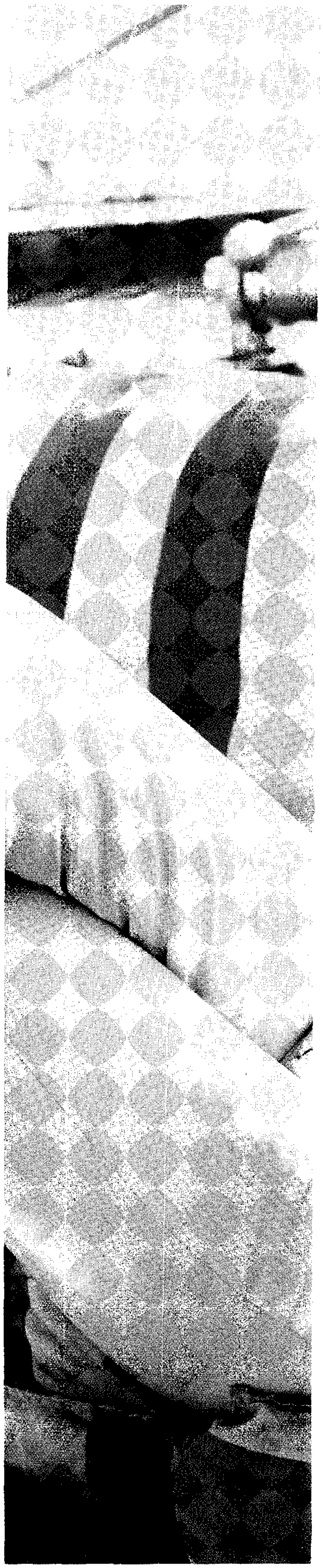
BY HILTON ALS

SUZY PARKER became America's first internationally famous model at the start of a very long and frosty Cold War. With her trademark russet hair, cygnet's neck, and just-this-side-of-melancholy smile, Parker portrayed a new kind of fashionable American woman: active and reflective, the girl most likely to be named homecoming queen—only to renounce the crown. "Use your mind!" Parker's father demanded at the beginning of her career, in 1948. And it was her mind, its process of intellection, that Parker revealed to the camera, along with a "look" that was like no other woman's on earth.

Parker's spirit, her quicksilver wit and to-hell-with-it imagination, is the inspiration for designers like John Galliano in fashion's current cool fifties revival—her easy American style, the sartorial manifestation of her spirit.

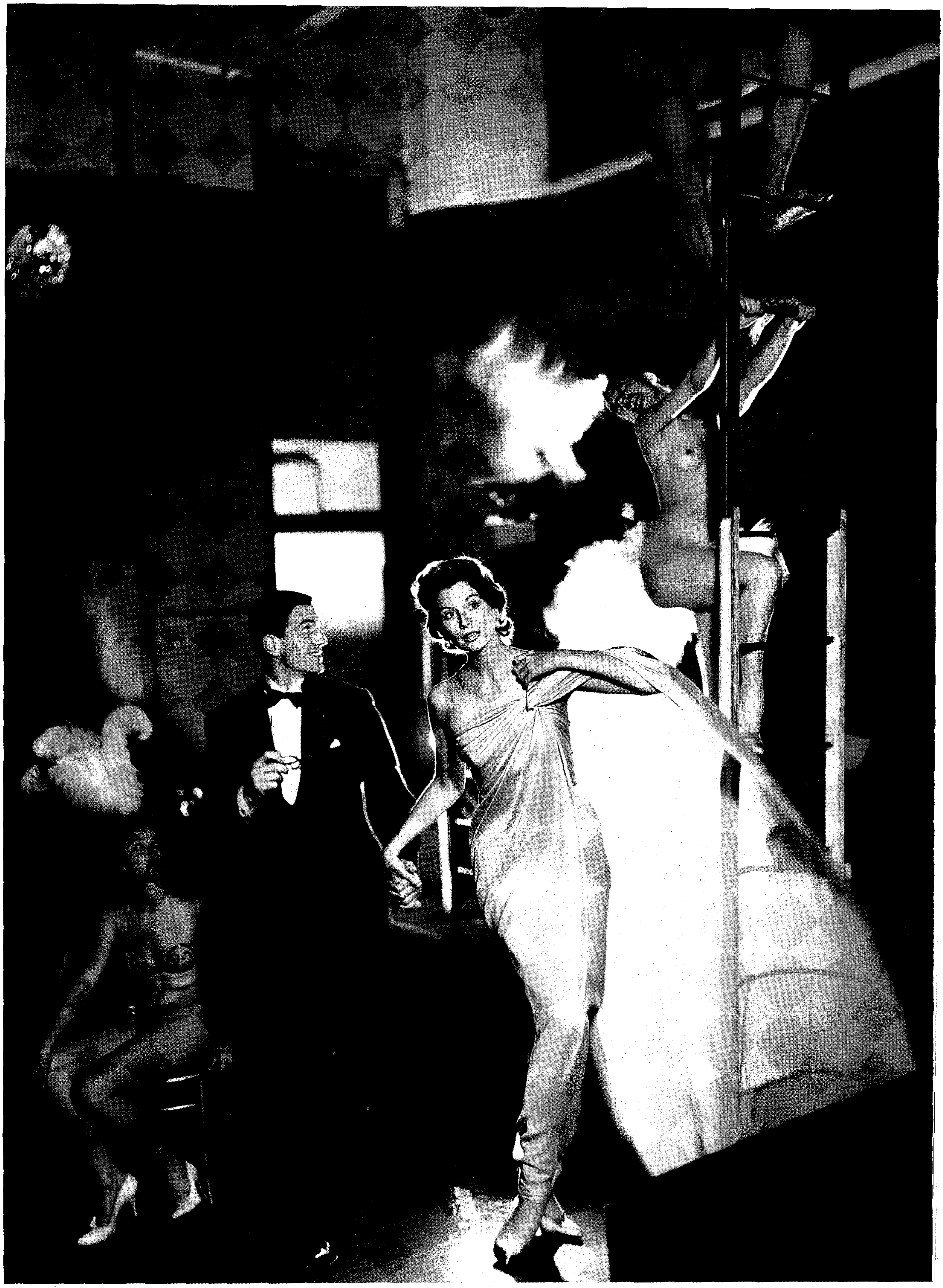
Like most stars, Parker worked in collaboration with a powerful director—Richard Avedon. "There were great models before and after Suzy," Avedon says, "but she was something else—a red-headed force of nature, a wolf in chic clothing, the one flesh-and-blood woman in a world of exquisite creatures." And, like most of the great actor-director teams of the fifties and sixties, Parker and Avedon defined their epoch. Pictured in the brave new world they invented was everything a red-blooded American girl should have: Coca-Cola, a Dior, time for reflection.

Parker does not have a speaking role in the opening sequence of "Funny Face." But we see in her eyes the woman she wanted to be and eventually became: wife of the actor Bradford Dillman and mother of six, content to let Suzy Parker, model and legend, go her own way. ♦

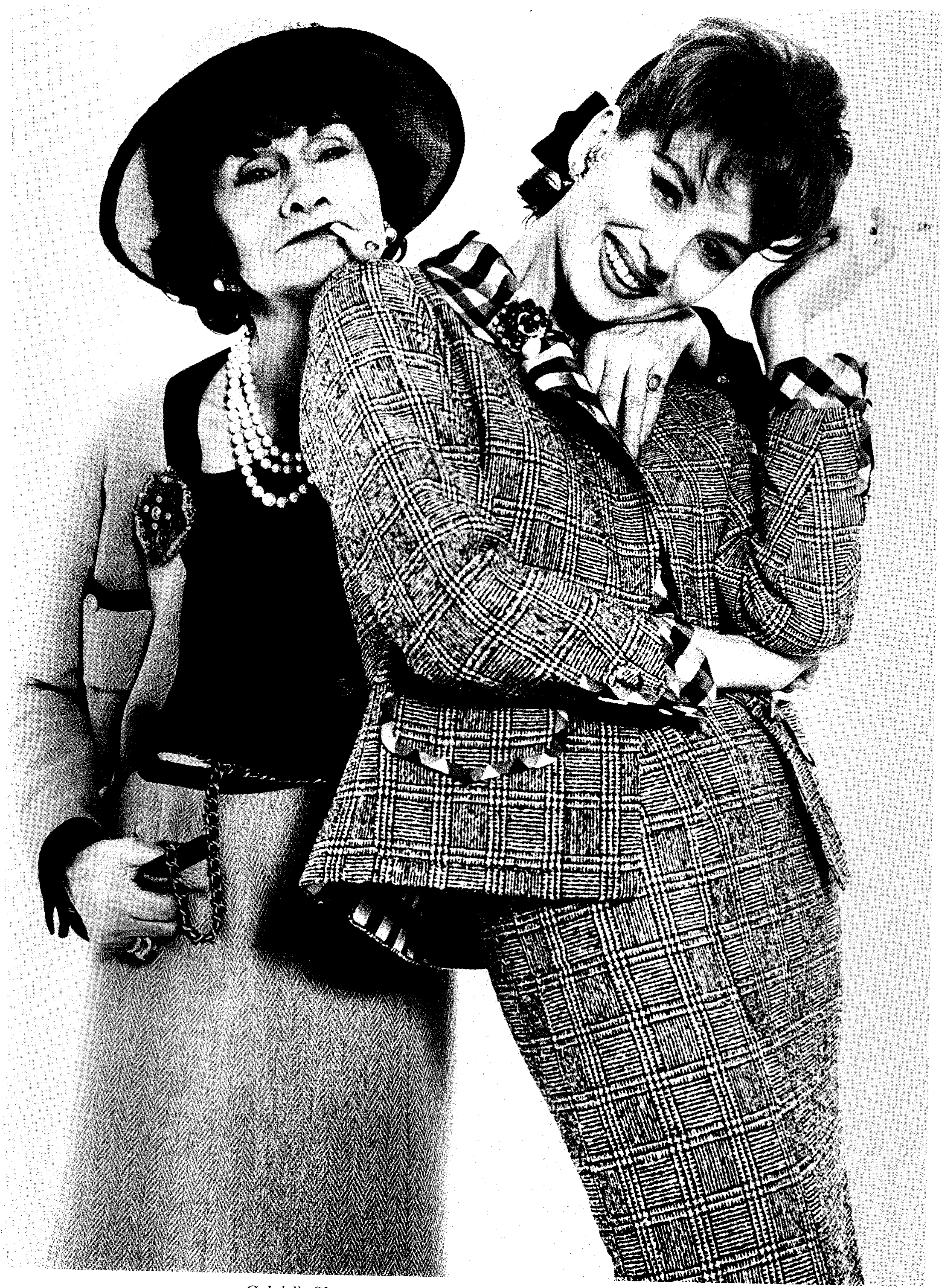


PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD AVEDON

Above: Parker with Gardner McKay and Robin Tattersall, Place de la Concorde, Paris, August, 1956. Right: In Antigua, January, 1962.



Suzy Parker and Robin Tattersall, Folies-Bergère, Paris, August, 1957.



Gabrielle Chanel and Suzy Parker, Paris studio, January, 1959.

FICTION

SUPERMAN, MY SON

BY THOM JONES

WILHELM BLAINE pulled his red Volvo wagon under the lone, stubby fig tree in front of his son Walter's California-beige stucco home. Somebody needed to get off their rear, get out here, and do a little landscaping. But Blaine knew it wasn't so bad behind the large cedar fence. It was a little enclave, really, with the pool, the Jacuzzi, the barbecue setup, and the rattan chairs. You could do a Winston Churchill—sit under lofty palms, sip a little brandy, smoke an expensive cigar, and discuss the weighty matters of the world.

Blaine ran down his electric windows, and the hefty scent of gardenia from the back yard hit him in the face. Behind the fence, Walter's wife, Zona, pruned, watered, and fertilized—but out front, nothing. The fig tree was in need of serious medical attention, and in general the whole neighborhood was taking a precipitous slide. Blaine saw lots of "For Rent" signs. Almost every driveway seemed overloaded. If it wasn't a pickup truck with jacked-up monster wheels, it was a pin-striped van or a Harley low rider amid broken bicycles and rusty automobile transmissions. When the subdivision was new, Walter had paid $240 K for his place, but Blaine had just seen a chicken prancing across a sun-torched lawn before he hung the left on Millpine Drive.

Blaine inched a few feet farther as he anticipated the amount of time he would spend inside. The Volvo would be an oven when he came out. Would Walter be laid out in a sluggish, torpid depression—insensible to reason or to the comforting reassurance of a father's voice? Or would he be mad as Saul, spewing poison and virulent accusations? Then there was his nephew Freddy, just back from Africa. Freddy could bullshit for hours. Blaine pondered these various intangibles. It would either be a lion's den or a morgue in there. He wanted to park the car so that it would be in at least partial shade. He looked back over his shoulder to the east, calculating, and caught a faceful of the 8:30 A.M. sun.

Poor Walter. He was a manic-depressive, and on this most recent flipout, according to Zona, he had somehow got buck-naked outside one of their supermarkets and dropped into the position of a Greek Olympian about to launch the discus. Zona said he locked up like a coiled spring. There was no discus to hurl but rather the Revised Standard Bible that he carried with him everywhere. And he would not let go. No amount of persuasion did any good. Walter *became* a statue, and they had to pick him up and take him to the emergency room just like that. The paramedics were furniture movers on that run. The incident did not have the feel of Walter's routine flipouts, either. Maybe this was a big one. Too bad Walter hadn't let the book sail. There was such a thing as religious toxicity. It was the worst poison of all. But Blaine wasn't going to go inside and say so. He wasn't going to get heavy-handed or come on too strong. He had done enough of that in the old days. He was just going to listen.

Zona had implied that Walter's ineffectual psychiatrist was some sort of "Christian" therapist. He had talked Walter out of his contortions, given him some Xanax, joined his hands in prayer, and then let Zona and Freddy drive Walter home. Blaine was glad he had missed the whole scene. He was worried about Walter but had troubles of his own. There were many things to do. Deals to be made. You just couldn't retire anymore. God almighty, no! You had to work right up until the day you died.

Blaine revved the motor for a second and then switched off the ignition. The Volvo was his only means of transportation now, and he had come to love the car, the way it automatically "found" all his destinations in town. He had sold his Ferrari for interest on taxes due—no principal paid off or anything, just penalties. The next thing to go would be the house. But, before he did that, he had to pour a small fortune into finishing his courtyard.

One of the workers employed on that project, a cheerful green-card, had stolen his Patek Philippe. The guy had been dumb enough to "admire" the watch prior to the theft. Blaine had him figured but realized there was little he could do. The police certainly wouldn't care. Not about a mere property crime. O.K., the poor bastard needed the money, and Blaine left valuables around. The temptation must have been incredible. In the old days, Blaine would hardly have cared, but the Shoprite Food Value Emporium empire was falling to pieces. It was getting impossible to compete with the bigger stores, and Blaine was literally getting taxed out of business—getting reamed to keep people like the green-card afloat in various social programs of dubious worth. The thanks he got was grand theft—grand theft one day and armed robbery the next. Almost immediately after the green-card incident, Blaine had made hot tracks to his bedroom safe for his coin collection (close to fifty thousand in value) and had driven the wagon to a coin shop in downtown Sacramento and then, oh, man—a chain of events ensued that still had him reeling.

There were four black men inside the store when the proprietor buzzed him in through the security gate. Blaine's pockets were laden with gold, and he could literally smell the trouble—on top of the alcohol there was a toxic smell of adrenaline coming from these thugs, and they were getting right into the proprietor's face. "How much this one? How many Rolexes you got, man? You got some in the back? I don't like these here."

It was a tremendous relief to see them go, but suddenly they were back—one of them claiming to have left a pair of sunglasses behind. The Vietnamese coin dealer, Phat H'at, or the Fat Hat, as he was known, buzzed them in again. You would have thought the old man had developed an instinct for trouble, but he acted like a complete fool. Blaine had his coins out on the counter by then, and the bandits quickly brandished little snub-nosed .38s. Hat went for his nickel-plated .45, but one of the men was over the counter faster than a cat. "Motherfucker! One more move out of you and you dead!"

Blaine had been glad that the bandit had some agility. He didn't want any shooting, although once the .45 was out of the way the robbers fired three shots into the security camera. *Ka-Pow! Ka-Pow!* Orange-and-blue flames burst out of the gun barrels. *Ka-Pow!* The harsh sound of the gunfire caused exquisite pain in his ears. One of the robbers scooped Blaine's coins into a bag, then executed a deft pirouette and expertly snatched the Cartier off Blaine's wrist and popped it into a pocket. Another man, wearing a ski mask, grabbed Blaine's wallet and began to rifle through it.

"You are welcome to all of it, gentlemen," Blaine had said, hands up, suddenly giddy. The savoir-faire with which he delivered these words seemed to calm the gunmen a little. It took the tension down a couple of notches. The biggest one pulled most of the green out of Blaine's wallet, but twelve bucks floated to the floor, and Blaine took a small satisfaction in stepping on the money. It was sort of a stupid thing to do, but Blaine felt possessed of a kind of Mel Gibson movie-house invulnerability. His left foot was on the ten, his right on the two singles, and he felt splendidly frozen in time, as if he were in a white tie and tails and doing a kind of lithe Fred Astaire—as if he suddenly knew what life wanted of him.

While the bandits fled the shop, Fat Hat ducked into the back room and emerged with a twelve-gauge. Blaine's happy spell was broken. "Hey, there! Wait a minute! Those hoods will come back in here and shoot us both," he said.

"Why you smiling? Why you smiling?" Hat said. "Taking sixteen Rolexes. Got all my cold, hard cash. Got all your gold, man!"

The Asian darted out into the parking lot, squatted, and levelled the gun from left to right. His movements resembled some ridiculous, partly forgotten foreign army-training maneuver—an action long ago imprinted in an Alzheimer's-demented brain. The bandits were peeling rubber, fishtailing away in an old diesel-powered Oldsmobile Toronado. One of them leaned out the window and blasted a couple of shots back, causing Fat Hat to drop prone and hug the asphalt. Blaine saw the blue-and-orange muzzle flame a second before he heard the shots. He watched the car swing out onto the freeway until the only sign of it was the lingering, thick white smoke of the tail exhaust. And very soon that was gone. The entire incident had lasted no more than a minute or two.

Fat Hat ran back inside and dialled 911. Then he turned on Blaine. "Them get away. Too fast for me. Getaway driver an' shit. Piss on this whole damn country, anyhow. I'm packing up and go back to Mauritius! No gun in your face all the time! Why you smiling? Stop that smiling, vexing me! Damn you, man. Why you smiling?"

"I'm smiling because . . . I'm alive." Blaine picked up his last twelve dollars. "And because I've got enough money to buy lunch."

IN some perverse way, the robbery had been fun. It was an adventure. Most of his gold was gone, but if thieves didn't get it, Walter's ineffectual psychiatrist would. Blaine returned to the thought of Wally frozen in the discus-thrower's position. His track specialty in high school had been the discus throw. Zona had told Blaine that Walter had been convinced the Bible was a tiny spaceship containing a crew of three hundred and fourteen perversely evil, micro-sized men who were extorting pocket change from some street bum Walter had recently met during his manic space walk. Walter was going to uncoil and hurl the little bastards to the farthest reaches of the Milky Way. Or something. He never really let the thing fly. Should have, probably. A normal person might find comfort in the fundamental religions, with their laws, promises, and the so-called covenant with God. But why listen to a bunch of cockamamie? Wasn't it better to pursue your own truths? Very few had the courage or the elasticity to go it alone, though. And to view Christianity through the lens of manic psychosis was dangerous. Blaine had shucked his own Bible in Germany just after the war. Blaine was a full-blooded German himself. He even took heat for it at the time ("You're one of *them*, Blaine, a fuckin' kraut"), but he saw what the Germans had done and he hated them for it. He knew the tendencies. His personality was marred by them, but at least he knew them. You didn't have to let a bug crawl up your ass and get all hellbent and mean, or trample over people to make money. You could treat people right without fearing or trying to please God. You could do it simply because it was human to do it, because love was a more ennobling tendency than hate, and if you were lucky, maybe you could live with yourself and sleep nights.

But Walter didn't have Blaine's German genes. Blaine and his wife, Joanna, had adopted Wally. The boy was just three when they got him. This whole manic-psychosis business had to be genetic. He had been a happy kid back in Appleton, Wisconsin. Blaine had racked his brain trying to think of some way in which he had failed his son. There was nothing major. Blaine recalled the streams of dogs, birds, and rabbits, and Walter's pals and girlfriends. Walter hadn't been a very good student, but he had one stupendous season as an all-state catcher on the baseball team. Blaine could still remember the fastball Wally drove deep into the right-center-field seats, breaking up a no-hitter in the state championship game. The opposing pitcher was brimming with confidence, and he challenged Walter with a fat one right down the middle. *Boom!* As soon as Wally made contact, everyone knew that ball was gone. It was one of those tape-measure jobs—four hundred and four feet. What a day that had been; probably the kid's best day. The very next week, Walter came within a half inch of setting a school record in the discus throw. The first athlete at Appleton to double-letter in spring sports. Blaine bought Walter a brand new Corvair a few days later, and in less than a month Walter was in the hospital; he had experienced his first manic flipout and rolled the car. There were subsequent hospitalizations for psychiatric treatment. Successions of therapists. Years of nothing but pain and trouble, really. Hell, trouble was the one constant in life. Pain and trouble. They pervaded everything.

Blaine stepped under the fig tree and examined its leaves. It had once been lush and productive of fruit, and now it was barren. Did it suffer—actually *suffer* on some level? He studied the tree with wonder, stroking its rough trunk. Love could save this plant. Zona could get her ass out here and save this plant if she *felt* like it. But you couldn't stay on top of everything. Blaine walked away from the fig tree. See you later. He was in up to his neck on several levels, and he realized now why he was stalling. He did not want to go inside.

It was a relief to duck into the vestibule and get out of the blazing sun. Blaine was sweating in his seersucker suit. He pushed the doorbell, swept his fingers through his chestnut-brown hair, and then rammed both hands in his pockets as he rocked back and forth on his heels. The right words would be there for him.

Zona Blaine clomped down the stairs wearing a short robe and a pair of her husband's slip-ons. She still had nice legs, and, in spite of her pool-lounging in the hot valley sun, she had nice skin. She was cradling a basket full of laundry and talking to her bird, Boo Boo, who was perched on her shoulder. She looked into the front room and said good morning to Walter's cousin, Freddy, who was leaning forward on the couch with a cup of coffee so hot he was fanning it with a copy of a bird magazine. Freddy didn't look so good. It had been a real shocker to Zona when she first got a load of him at the airport. He was beyond what one might term "a whiter shade of pale," and he had dropped fifty pounds. He claimed it was malaria.

Zona swung open the garage door and loaded the washer. She was back in a second and said, "This bird is crazy."

"Can it talk?" Freddy said.

"You should hear him. I go out into the garage and he says, 'Whacha doin'?' I say, 'I'm doing the laundry, Boo Boo.' He says, 'Need any help?' "

"No!" Freddy declared.

"I'm not kidding. 'Need any help?' "

"That's wild. What else does he say?" Freddy cranked the footrest of the lounger down and made an assault on the hot cup of coffee.

"He does a one-way telephone conversation: 'Yeah . . . uh-huh . . . yeah?' Then he'll pause, you know. 'Oh, yeah? Uh-huh. That's right.' Pause again. 'Oh, yeah? Ah-ha-ha-ha!' "

Freddy said, "Is it like parakeet chatter? Or is it like human?"

"It's just like human. Parakeets—" Zona screwed up her face and cocked her head to the side. " 'Pretta bird, chich chich chich. Pretta bird.' That's all you get from parakeets."

"Parakeets have got that tinny quality," Freddy said. He picked up a bright-blue butane lighter and shook a Kool from his pack. "What about Uncle Willy's parrot? That bird can talk."

"Roberto? 'I ham joost hey lineman for zee county.' "

Freddy lit his cigarette and inhaled deeply. "Roberto bit me on the cuticle last time I was over there. Took out a chunk of meat. I still got the scar."

"African grays," Zona said. "They are mean, but they're the best talkers. 'Hey, hey, pretty wooman. Wot harrrh you wearing such hey sexy blouse for? You harrh making me so hot, bébé.' "

"He's a smooth one, all right. He gets you to trust him and then he bites you. Does he bite Uncle Willy?"

"He bites them one and all. Roberto is a real card. He's a character," Zona said.

"Who taught him all that Spanish? He must be a pre-owned bird. It's always a sex trip or that stupid song."

" 'Bésame Mucho,' " Zona said.

"Yes. I hate that song. It makes me depressed. If I bought a pre-owned bird, I'd get it from a soul brother, not some bean-head Ricardo Montalban. It always starts in with that song at six in the morning. And, it's like, loud."

Blaine remained in the porchway with his hands in his pockets, rocking on his heels, wondering if the doorbell had shorted out. But then he heard voices inside. He gave the door a little rap. He was thinking of the stickup, wondering if his insurance would cover it. Well, it would or it wouldn't.

He gave the door a second sharp rap and stepped inside. Blaine liked his entrances to seem like explosions. His voice was a rich baritone, and he liked to ham. "Is somebody in here bad-mouthing my parrot?"

"Hey, hey, hey!" Freddy said. He got up to shake hands with his uncle, but they ended up in a tight, back-slapping embrace. It had been three years. The family had been dying out fast. Blaine and Walter were the only relations left on Freddy's paternal side, and, by the looks of him, Blaine wondered how long Freddy would last. He looked terrible.

Blaine held his nephew at arm's length and studied his face. "My God, Freddy, it's good to see you again. Jesus! How are you feeling?"

"Not too bad. How are you? Lucky to be alive, ain't you? Stick 'em up, dude!"

"Oh, Christ," Blaine said dismissively. "I was just thinking about those cocksuckers. They got away clean. I'm lucky to be alive. Or not so lucky, when you consider the state of the world. A bullet between the eyes might have been a blessing. I'm seventy-two, for Christ's sake. I am probably nourishing monstrous occlusions and tumors of which I'm not yet aware but will be presently. Ha! But what about you? What about this number you pulled on the airplane?"

"I hate to go into that," Freddy said. "I'll just get riled up again."

"No, tell me," Blaine said. He was an expert at drawing people out, and he loved lurid tales. Blaine winked at Zona, who ran upstairs to put on some clothes.

"I haven't done anything like that in years," Freddy said. "I thought I was in control, that those days were over. But sometimes there is a black-and-white situation where anger seems completely justified."

"I want to hear the whole story. Don't shortchange me," Blaine said, as he selected a pipe from Walter's pipe rack and began loading it from a cannister of coarse tobacco.

Freddy took a quick hit off his cigarette. "Well, imagine," he said. "From Douala, in Cameroon, to Kinshasa, to Dar, to the Africa House in Zanzibar—party, party for a couple of days—and then on to Paris, customs at L.A., blah blah, and then here. Until the water bed in the guest bedroom last night, the last time I was in between sheets and really slept was at the Hotel Akwa on the Boulevard de la Liberté in fucking Douala—the armpit of Africa. That was just before the latest round with this fucking malaria. None of it was too bad, until I hit that airline strike in Los Angeles. I was supposed to be in business class, but they somehow had me in the last seat in the tail section—one of those seats that don't tilt back. You can take that shit when you're young, but I was having my—you know, my epileptic twitches, and I'm back there going off like a machine gun, rat-a-tat-tat, and in the meantime the steward is dishing shit out to everybody, like we're in prison and he’s the yard boss. I got into it with him. I just let him have it, that’s all. Zona, is there any more coffee?”

“How many cups have you had already?” Zona said. She had fixed her hair in a ponytail and had thrown on a cotton sundress.

“Just two.”

Zona looked to her father-in-law. “All he does is sit there, drink coffee, and smoke cigarettes. He won’t eat. I didn’t think doctors smoked anymore.”

“Who said doctors had good sense?” Freddy said. “Doctors can be the craziest sons of bitches in the world. Behind the bulwark of authority, self-assurance, and the seemingly judicious intelligence of the white coat, too often unrighteousness, lunacy, and sheer incompetence sit at the helm. Thus it is in medicine as in all walks of life; in medicine, more so. Drug addicts, suicides, desperate people. I mean, I publish in the journals. I have a certain renown. So you see what the world’s coming to.” Freddy presented Zona with the empty mug. “Please. More. I’ve got jet lag and a real bad case of the poontang blues.”

Zona went into the kitchen, and Blaine leaned forward and whispered, “You get much pussy over there—you know, in Africa?”

“Yeah, sure,” Freddy said nervously. “A little. Some one-night stands with the ever-circulating network of aid workers. Some of the hard cases will go to the ground and marry natives. A lot of the Catholics sublimate. I can do that, too. I can sublimate.”

“You mean you just don’t do it?” Blaine said.

“Well, it’s pretty risky. AIDS is everywhere. It used to be bad in the big cities, but now it’s all over. It puts the fear of God into you.”

Zona returned with a coffee tray. “Tell Willy how you lost your shoe.”

Freddy began to fan his mug as soon as Zona filled it. “I’m sure Uncle Willy would rather hear about Walter.”

Blaine wiggled a little bag of NutraSweet, ripped off the top, and dumped the contents into his cup. “Zona filled me in about Walter late last night. You tell me about the flight from hell.”

Freddy sipped his coffee. “Am I talking too fast?” He didn’t wait for an answer. “I am now and was then all whacked-out on mefloquine. I was not really lucid, but still it dawned on me that whenever anybody had a request that was within this steward’s power to fulfill, he just said, ‘Yeah, just a minute,’ and didn’t *do* anything. We were just sitting dead on the ground like for about an hour and a half, and the steward took that rude New York tone, ‘Everybody on the plane is a revenue-paying customer. If you want another seat, you’ll have to trade with somebody once we get into the air.’ I just lost it. ‘Who in the *hell* do you think you are, jacking everybody around? Motherfucker, I have been out in the damn jungle in Cameroon. I have been on an airplane or in a transient lounge for two and a half days, and you think you got it bad ’cause you’re working a double shift. Well, how do you think *I* feel?’

“He came right back. ‘Fuck you!’ he says, and then, bingo, we start wrestling in the aisle, and two cops get onto the plane and grab me. ‘You’re under arrest!’ I’ve been three years in Central Africa and nothing happens to me until I get back to the imperialistic, fascist state!”

Blaine had thought he would come into the house and have words for whatever hit him, but the spectacle of Freddy left him speechless.

Freddy gulped down more coffee, lit another Kool, and, thus freshly armed, leaned forward and continued. “People were still trying to get on the plane, it was a big cluster fuck, and the police were dragging me away; I lost a shoe, and some little Greek lady got up and said, ‘Hold it right there! That man did nothing wrong! *That man did nothing wrong*. It was *him*, Mr. Sunny Jim there!’ She’s pointing to the steward. ‘It was all his fault.’ So there is some justice in the universe. The cops stopped, like, ‘Oh, yeah?,’ and the steward said, ‘Screw this job, who needs it?’ I mean, this is the kind of shit that happens on a cross-country Trailways bus ride when some maniac is stoked on fortified wine. And I never did find my shoe. Off to the baggage claim wearing socks.” Freddy had a pencil-thin mustache and a short goatee, which he fingered nervously while he patted perspiration from his forehead with a folded linen tea napkin. Blaine stared at him.

“Stop looking at me like that,” Freddy said. “I get crazy when I tell that story. I’m better now, really, if I could just—if God would just have mercy on me and let me get a little sleep.” He laughed nervously. “So tell us about the robbery. Four of them, with gunfire. Was dey blood? Was dey niggazzh?”

“They were thugs,” Blaine said. “They just pumped a few shots into the ceiling, that’s all. Why do you denigrate them? You are over in Africa for three years, ostensibly saving African lives, dispensing care—”

Freddy flicked his hand at a fly. Blaine took note of the limp wrist action and the way Freddy crossed his legs. In spite of a lifelong fondness for Freddy, Blaine felt himself disapproving of his nephew’s whole demeanor.

“It’s just a manner of speaking, Uncle Willy. You yourself referred to them as ‘cocksuckers.’ Was this coin dealer insured?”

“I still don’t know,” Blaine said. “My lawyer’s handling it. It’s depressing. I am down to selling paintings and coins so I can fix up that courtyard. In the morning, I’m importing a fountain from Italy, before lunch I am robbed, and in the afternoon I’m shopping for a double-wide.”

“You’re such a kidder,” Freddy said. “Zona, did you hear that, babe? He’s getting a double-wide.”

“I’m serious,” Blaine said. “I’ve got some scrub acreage. I’ll plop it down there. *Pow!*” Blaine slapped his hand on the coffee table. “Home, sweet home. I’ll sit there and call it good.” He relit his pipe. “Where is Walter, for God’s sake? How is he?”

Zona gave Blaine another cup of coffee. “He’s up in the bedroom.”

“Won’t come out?” Blaine said.

“No,” Zona said. “I’ve been trying to baby him but . . . well, you know Walter. He’s the biggest and best manic-depressive in the Golden State. When he’s up, *fa-gam!* The planet Krypton. He can fly there in an hour. But when he’s down, he’s really down. A major crash.”

Blaine’s face became a mask of concern. “He’s back on the lithium, isn’t he?”

“Yes,” Zona said, “and I could sue that damn psychiatrist! ‘Try the Tegretol a little longer.’ ‘He doesn’t need any damn Tegretol,’ I said. ‘You sit there real calm and say, “Try the Tegretol a little longer; check back in two weeks,” and Walter is running around in a three-piece wool suit and no underwear!’

He's got the Samsonite out and he's packing. I say, 'Walter, where are you going?' He says, 'I'm blasting back to Krypton. To be among my own kind.' And—*fa-gam!*—out the door he goes, wearing a damn three-piece wool suit, no underwear, a horrible tie, nine pounds of wing tips and no socks; he's got huge blisters on his heels and doesn't even seem to know. It has to be at least a hundred and twelve out and he's wearing that ugly damn brown suit of his, copping a load of b.o.—when he finally ditched it, I burned the damn thing. When you get b.o. into wool, it never comes out. Pick it up with a pole. He says, 'Where's my brown suit?' 'Walter, that suit is out of style.' 'It's so old it went out of style and came back in,' he says. I said, 'They never quite do, they never quite do, and every fool knows that.' "

"But he's on the lithium now?" Blaine asked. His focus was on Zona now. He was completely concentrating on her.

"Finally," Zona said. "I'm about ready to lose my mind. He packed up that Samsonite and was off. I'm not lying. The Eye of Horus and Rosicrucians. I'm serious."

"Can I go up and see him?" Blaine said.

"I don't think that would be a very good idea," Zona said. "His remarks concerning his father have been kind of volatile lately." She picked up one of Freddy's Kools and lit it. "Damn, three months without a cigarette," she said.

"Well, I guess every son wants to kill his dad on some level," Blaine said. "But I thought the Tegretol was doing him good."

"It was at first. His psoriasis cleared up entirely. He was going to his recovery meetings, to Bible study, to bird meetings. When Walter is straight, he's totally on the ball. But this shrink had him on Prozac, too. Got him horny. Let me tell you. Five times a day! I said, 'Walter, I'm not made out of steel. You may be Superman, but I'm a forty-six-year-old woman with a hysterectomy last year. Give me a break.' "

Freddy began to finger his goatee again. "Psoriasis. In terms of diseases, it's a metaphor for rage."

"What's that supposed to mean?" Blaine said.

"You are Walter's father," Freddy said. "You would have the insight. The skin is a very emotive organ. Don't get so touchy."

Blaine leaned forward with his forearms balanced on his knees. He gave a little sigh and turned up his palms. "We adopted Wally when he was three," he said. "Most of the psychic damage had to have been done long before. We were good parents. Who knows? Maybe manic psychosis is genetic. The psoriasis comes from the pills. Of course, what he says may be true. He may indeed come from Smallville. Perhaps he truly is Superman. He went through the windshield of a Corvair without a scratch."

"It's a possibility we should consider," Freddy said. "Superman."

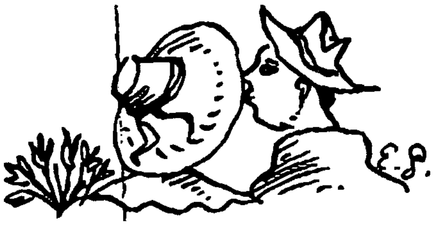
Blaine turned to Zona. "What about Turkey? Can't you go back there for the psoriasis?"

"Turkey?" Freddy said, pinching his chin.

"Yes," Blaine said. "There's this village in Turkey that has a kind of hot springs with these weird little fish in it, and what you do is sit in the springs and the fish come up and nibble your skin. There's something in their saliva, or whatever, that causes the skin to heal over. Two weeks and you're in remission."

"I'm not going back to damn Turkey," Zona said. "They don't have any magic carpets. What they got is buses with bald tires, nonexistent shock absorbers, and all the windows stuck shut! Damn! I'm a California girl. I like air-conditioners, clean water, and a certain amount of oxygen in my atmosphere." Zona shot a stream of smoke out of the side of her mouth. "And they've got laws from day one over there. They used to hang you for drinking coffee and smoking."

"Pretty soon they'll be doing it here," Freddy said. "Have you noticed that now you can't get away with a sexist or racial remark, but smokers are open game? I mean every news broadcast, the front page of every paper. A cigarette was just a cigarette twenty years ago, but now the smoker is a pariah."



"That's true," Blaine said. "All that hate has to come out. The world needs scapegoats. No one will embrace the other—the inner dark man."

"And in another ten years coffee drinkers will be on the list," Zona said, taking a measured drag on the cigarette. "Coffee makes people violent or something."

"They should tax it, if you want to know," Blaine said. "I mean, if you get right down to it, how much would you pay for a Kool and a cup of rocket fuel before you had to get dressed and hit the road?"

Freddy fiddled with his lighter. "Getting up in the morning, for coffee and a cigarette? I don't know, considering my present financial circumstances, which are meagre, every last dime . . . seven hundred."

"You see. You aren't the only one, either; there are thousands like you," Blaine said. "We could wipe out the national debt."

Freddy shook a Kool from his pack and lit it. He put an arch in his voice. "Excuse me, do y'all mind if I smoke?"

"I like them too much," Zona said as she mashed hers out. "I better go check on Walter."

Blaine waved his daughter-in-law over to him and spoke quietly. "Was there some kind of precipitating event? What the hell *really* happened?"

"A neighbor—this guy, this asshole hurt his back at work and is collecting disability. If you ask me, it's a bullshit claim. He sits in his garage and drinks beer all day, or you'll see him doing real heavy labor, like he's got the strongest back in the world. Anyhow, he comes over here and says Walter's birds are too loud. Calls the city. They come out and say Walter isn't zoned for an aviary. You know how Walter lives for those birds. Well, not only do we have to get rid of the birds, move them out to the stables, but they want us to tear up the construction. If I were a man I would take that guy out with one punch. One punch! End of conversation. End of problem."

"I can't believe Walter is cowed by some guy with a bad back," Freddy said. "He's a damn sumo."

Zona said, "Yes, but he's not mean, and he really gets into the Christian life style. So now it takes a half hour to drive out to the stables. It takes an hour to cut up fruit. You have to bleach the tables, the cutting boards, and all the paraphernalia, because of salmonella, which can wipe out a flock overnight. Lories eat fruit and nectar; they aren't seed eaters. That's the big downside on lories. You do that twice a day and try to run a business and it will snap you. Of course, the city is right. We aren't zoned for an aviary. So there you are."

"And I've got to sell the stables," Blaine said. "I wish we'd dumped the business ten years ago and bugged out for Mexico. We got an offer for seven million at the time, but we were taking in a hundred and ninety-five thousand a month clear. Now I'm stuck. Our traffic is down by half, the lease payments and payroll are killing us. The next thing, I really will be living in a double-wide. In fact, I don't see any way to avoid it."

"We'll all be living in the double-wide when I pay for this last caper," Zona said. She picked up the laundry basket and headed upstairs.

Blaine looked over at Freddy. "So you really love it over there, in Central Africa?"

"I do," Freddy said. "I feel that my life has meaning there. I can't do any good over here. I'm just not built for here. In Africa, I thrive, although it's very hard. Africa generates and consumes at an accelerated rate. You can feel it buzz. An hour of rain can turn a desert green in a day, the grass will grow three inches in a week, and two more days of sun can turn the green brown. Production, consumption. It's so instant. It's just . . . super. You can understand the whole 'cradle of civilization' business the minute you take a breath over there. They gave me a medical leave. I just came home to recover. This is a horseshit life back here."

"Joanna and I did Kenya and Tanzania just before she died—what, two summers ago? I guess that's just Disneyland compared to Cameroon, but I think I know what you mean."

At these words, Freddy did an ultra-femme double take, and Blaine's suspicions were confirmed. He thought of AIDS, and found himself cringing inwardly, as if in the presence of a vampire.

"Shit," Freddy said, "I didn't know you guys went to Africa. What about your pathological fear of lions? You told me when I was little that a lion was going to eat you."

"You are right. I thought a lion would get me. As a kid, I saw the picture. My mother said it was a dream. They took me to the doctor, but it wasn't a dream. It was some sort of E.S.P. I was terrified that Barnum & Bailey would drive by in a convoy, have an accident, and let a lion loose—that it would make its way to my house and eat me. This was my greatest fear."

"But you went to Kenya. Why would you go *there*? To tempt fate?"

Blaine said, "Well, when we rented the cherry farm out, up in Oregon—Didn't I tell you this? When we rented the cherry farm to those hippies, the lions almost did get me."

"What lions on the cherry farm?" Freddy said.

"Jesus!" Blaine said. "I drove up to the cherry farm in Salem to check on the property when your dad was in the nuthouse. I knew something was going on, and I was right."

"What?"

"Well, hell, the tenants were five months behind in the rent," Blaine said. "Dope-smoking hippies. I rented them the place because they were Walter's friends. 'Oh, Mr. Blaine, we'll take care of the place just like it was our own.' Shit! Everything was either missing or ruined. They even cut a hole in the front door so their Rottweiler could go in and out. They had opium poppies in the front yard—the little pods were oozing juice from razor slits. I figured that if they're growing opium in the yard, they had to have grow lights in the basement. I told the hippie housewife I was going to go down in the basement to check on the furnace, and she panicked—*no, no, you can't do that*. When a little kid started crying upstairs, I had my chance. Down into the basement, I turn around and there's a fully grown African lion—"

"Jesus Christ!"

Blaine came up from the couch slightly with his palms out as if he were summoning up a vision in a crystal ball. His eyes darted from left to right as he reënacted the scene. "A fully grown lioness crouching down in the seven-o'clock position, and from the front comes a male. I knew then that my picture was coming true. The male let out a growl that shook the rafters, almost knocked me down—Christ! Ten seconds later the hippie earth-mother bitch is down the stairs with an umbrella, popping it in the female's face. Those were a long ten seconds." Blaine sat back on the couch and sipped his coffee. "The coin shop was a romp compared."

"God! Mary Poppins," Freddy said, squealing with delight.

"She says, 'Back, Sheena!' " Blaine extended his left leg, pulled his pant leg loose, and laughed.

Freddy rattled off a laugh of his own and dabbed at his face with another of Zona's linen tea napkins. "Jesus! You never told me this."

Blaine scowled as he took a swig of coffee. "Freddy, you've got that too-much-Elavil, no-energy fairy voice again."

"My voice isn't *that* bad," Freddy said. "I'm starving, sleep-deprived, malarial, and if I don't take a leak pretty soon, I'm going to piss my pants! Give me a break, dude."

At this, Blaine slapped his thigh and laughed. "It is *that* bad," he mimicked. Then he was on his feet again, acting out the scene in the basement. He would imitate a lion, then himself, then the hippie housewife, and then a lion again. "*Back, Sheena!*"

Freddy mopped his face. "Zona, he's making me laugh. I'm going to pee on the rug!" He jumped up, and, cupping his genitals, began to dance like a pair of scissors. "Quick—what happened to the lions? A zoo?"

"Euthanized," Blaine said. "But the point is my picture was right in the ballpark. I went to Africa because lions in Africa weren't my problem. It was lions in Oregon."

"My voice isn't *that* bad. It's . . . normal."

"It's airy-fairy," Blaine said. He held his hand out and let it quaver. "I'm just telling you because you're my nephew, and somebody has to point these things out. It was really bad when you said, 'Excuse me, do you mind if I smoke?' "

Freddy threw his head back and laughed. "That was *intentional!* I was doing the nineteen-thirties movie thing. You're just getting crabby because you need to eat. Did you have anything for breakfast?"

"A doughnut," Blaine said.

"Well, you were sugared up and now you're down. You came in booming with good cheer and now you're Mr. Crab Patch. Maybe we should make some eggs or something?" Freddy said.

Zona came downstairs with a thick red copy of the *Physicians' Desk Reference* and shoved it at Freddy's chest, knocking him back on the couch. "Page 2,257," she said. "Interpret the lingo, buster."

"What's going on up there?" Blaine said.

Zona said, "I put Boo Boo in with Walter. They're talking."

"They're talking? You mean like 'How're ya doin'?' " Freddy said.

Zona stroked her cheek. " 'Whacha doin'?' 'Just layin' here, Boo.' 'Are you feeling bad, Captain?' 'I feel pretty rough. I sure do.' 'Give me a kiss.' Talking like that."

"Well, at least he's talking. Last night—last night was *bad*," Freddy said.

"It's tearing me up," Blaine said, reaching through the buttons of his shirt to rub his chest. "This on top of everything else."

Zona rapped the "*P.D.R.*" with her knuckles. "How long before the pills kick in?"

Freddy's finger ran expertly down a column as he scanned the entry for Eskalith. " 'Typical symptoms of mania include pressure of speech, motor hyperactivity, reduced need for sleep, flight of ideas, grandiosity, elation, poor judgment, aggressiveness and possibly hostility. When given to a patient experiencing a manic episode, *Eskalith* may produce a normalization of symptomatology within one to three weeks.' Why, it sounds great. We could all do with some."

There was a large crash and the sound of heavy footfalls upstairs. "God damn it! Who's laughing down there?" The voice came down like thunder, with an overlay of fear and paranoia.

"I'll be right back," Zona said. She rushed up the stairs, swung open the bedroom door, stepped inside, and pushed it shut.

"Shit," said Blaine. "I'm going up there."

"Zona can handle it. He finds men threatening. We better wait. He's got the strength of twenty."

"Maybe you're right," Blaine said. "She's really been good for him. An angel. Really."

"Most women couldn't handle the psoriasis, let alone the—"

"She doesn't even see it; it's not a consideration." said Blaine. He sat with both arms extended on the top of the couch and managed to sneak a look at his new Timex Indiglo.

At last, Walter appeared at the top of the stairs. He was a huge man, balding, with a six-week beard. He cinched the tie on his white terry-cloth bathrobe. He held a worn Bible in his hand and looked crazed. Zona followed him as he grabbed the railing and worked his way down the steps.

"Hi, Dad. Hi, Freddy," Walter said meekly. He paused on the third step from the bottom and looked down at the two men.

"Walter wants some breakfast," Zona said. "Or should we have lunch? It's getting late. Would you guys like to eat?"

"We were just talking about that," Freddy said. "Eggs. Protein. Whole-wheat toast. Tomato juice. I'm a nervous fucking wreck. I look like hell. At least Walter *looks* like a human being. I'm just a skeleton in a bag of skin. And I don't have AIDS and I'm not gay, if that's what you're all thinking—so you can quit boiling the silverware."

Walter stared awkwardly at the two men and then raised his left hand like an Indian. "I would like to read something. A prayer."

"Read?" Blaine said.

"Great," Freddy said. "I'm going to piss my pants, but first a prayer."

Walter fumbled through his Bible. At first it seemed that he was O.K., and then it appeared that the effort was almost too much for him to bear. He had to grab the bannister to steady himself. His lips were dry, and he kept running his tongue over them. Large beads of perspiration began to form on his forehead. The onionskin pages of his Bible were sticking together. He flipped through them, stopping occasionally to study the text. From the look on his face, it seemed that he was trying to decipher an incomprehensible language. The Bible began to wobble in his huge hands like a divining rod. "I'm sorry," he said. "Geez! Are you guys hot? Is it hot down here?"

"It's just hotter than a *mother*fucker," Freddy said. "It's Africa hot!"

"It's warm," Zona said. "Air-conditioner or no. But you're sweating because of the lithium, and Freddy has a fever. Don't indulge yourselves with symptomatic lingo. It just makes everything worse."

"You're right, baby," Walter said. He opened the Bible again, and, leaning against the wall, studied the page, while Blaine, Zona, and Freddy waited expectantly. At last Walter was ready. A gleam came to his eye. He was running with sweat. He pulled the Bible up close to his face, as if he were severely nearsighted. He read at an infuriatingly slow pace, but his audience watched with rapt attention:

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High,
who abides in the shadow of the Almighty,
will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust."
For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler
and from the deadly pestilence;
he will cover you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.
You will not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.

A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand;
but it will not come near you.
You will only look with your eyes
and see the recompense of the wicked.

Because you have made the Lord your refuge,
the Most High your habitation,
no evil shall befall you,
no scourge come near your tent.

For he will give his angels charge of you
to guard you in all your ways.
On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you dash your foot against a stone.
You will tread on the lion and the adder,
the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

"Because he cleaves to me in love, I will deliver him;
I will protect him, because he knows my name.
When he calls to me, I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble,
I will rescue him and honor him.
With long life I will satisfy him,
and show him my salvation."

By the time Walter finished, his robe was soaked, and the sweat was popping off his face, plopping down on the pages of the Bible. His hands were shaking. He continued to work his tongue over his cracked lips. He closed the book and pressed it to his breast.

"I'm still a little bit messed up," Walter said. "But I think I'm going to be O.K. The lithium is starting to work. That's why I'm sweating so bad. I'm dehydrated, too. Honey, can I have some Diet Shasta—black cherry, two cans?"

Zona put her arm around his shoulder. "You're going to be fine, babe. Just fine. I'll get you the pop and then fix all you boys up with some grub."

Freddy got up and hugged his cousin. "It's cool, Wally. I love you, man. But I've got to hit the water closet. Was it a good trip?"

"It was righteous, cuz. I saw the alpha and the omega, but I'm back now. Go forth and pee," Walter said. "And then *everybody* get back out here so we can do a big circle hug and sing joyous praise for a multitude of blessings."

"Fuck you," Freddie said.

"That's right, Walter, just fuck it, huh?" Zona called from the kitchen. Her tone was light.

When it was his turn, Blaine embraced Walter and at once recalled the joy he felt forty-seven years and some before, when he first held this stranger, the adopted little boy.

The Blaine name would end with Walter and Freddy. Zona was sterile, like Joanna. Unless by some remote stretch Freddy got married, it was over, and Blaine was sure now that Freddy was gay and suffering from the first symptoms of AIDS. Blaine took in all these thoughts in a rush, and through eyes slightly blurring with tears he glanced outside and saw how the shadow of the withering fig tree had disappeared at noon, leaving his Volvo a victim of the blistering sun. Heat waves shimmered off the faded paint job. Most people at least had the satisfaction of knowing that they would live on in their grandchildren. Even atheists took consolation in that.

Blaine gave Walter a tight hug. His son was soaking wet. "You had me worried there, kiddo. It's good to have you back."

"Thanks, Dad," Walter said. "I'm O.K. now. It's all right."

Blaine broke loose from Walter and with a croaking voice called to Zona, "Just a minute, beautiful. Let me give you a hand out there." As he stepped away from the living room, Blaine dabbed the tears from his eyes, quickly blew his nose, and fought to regain his composure before he exploded around the corner singing, *"Bé-sa-me, bésame mucho, como si fuera esta noche la última vez. . . ."* ◆

FIRST REPORTED SIGHTING

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BOOKS

CHINESE WHISPERS

Mao and Deng, up close and impersonal.

BY IAN BURUMA

CHAIRMAN MAO had only one ball—that is to say, only one ball in its proper place. The other was stuck in his abdomen. Hitler is alleged to have had the same problem. This is not to suggest that there is a deep Freudian correlation between undescended testicles and tyranny. But it is the kind of intimate detail to which only certain people could have been privy. In the case of Mao, this group would have included his several wives, his many, many young female playmates, and his doctors. Dr. Li Zhisui, the author of "The Private Life of Chairman Mao" (translated by Tai Hung-chao, with the editorial assistance of Anne F. Thurston; Random House; $30), was in closer touch with the Chairman's body than perhaps anyone else. Mao's health, from 1954 until his death, in 1976, was in Dr. Li's frightened hands.

The doctor, whose family tree is filled with medical men, was an unlikely figure to become so close to the Communist dictator. He was a typical bourgeois intellectual, born and bred in Beijing. To make matters worse—in terms of Chinese class warfare—he spent a year working as a ship's surgeon in Sydney, Australia, in the late forties. But in the byzantine atmosphere of Mao's court Dr. Li's cosmopolitan provenance was evidently to Mao's liking, for his political vulnerability made him completely dependent on the Chairman's good will. Without Mao's protection, Li and his family would never have survived the anti-rightist, anti-bourgeois, anti-intellectual purges of the nineteen-fifties and sixties. Even so, Dr. Li writes, during the Cultural Revolution he felt "in constant fear" for his safety—so strongly, in fact, that in 1966 he burned the more than forty volumes of notes he had accumulated on his life with Mao. The book at hand is based on his writings since 1977, by which time he had lost all sympathy with the Chairman.

The connection between doctors and potentates is fascinating, and is of great importance to historians, for it is often the closest relationship in a tyrant's life: Hitler and his surgeon; Himmler and his masseur; Mao and his physician. The reason, I think, is this: the price of seeking absolute power is that you can trust no one. Every absolutist court is of necessity a nest of intrigue, sycophancy, and treachery. Doctors and lovers are in a special category, however. For even the despot has to stand naked—and thus vulnerable—before them. No wonder, then, that royal mistresses and wives have wielded great power. Mao's last wife, Jiang Qing, managed to tear China apart with her Shanghai cronies for almost a decade during the Cultural Revolution. And Mao's mistress, Zhang Yufeng, who was a former railway hostess, was the most powerful figure in Mao's court in the nineteen-seventies. She was the only one who could read his dribbling lips after his speech became unintelligible, and she controlled access to the sick old man; even Jiang Qing had to go through her.

Mao's successor as the de-facto emperor of China, Deng Xiaoping, was never known to be a ladies' man, and he is, in any case, beyond mistresses now. Instead he has his powerful daughter Maomao to act as his minder, watchdog, nurse, hearing aid, and interpreter (if he can still speak at this stage). Her closeness to Deng is the only possible reason one might want to read her book, "Deng Xiaoping, My Father" (Basic Books; $27.50), which is a turgid, barely literate piece of propaganda, presented as a biography of her father up until 1949. She still uses the Communist *langue de bois*, which has become almost quaint, even in China. On the people who joined the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army: "They knew only that they had found the truth. They were proud to devote their lives to the future destiny of China and the 400 million Chinese people. In so doing, they became heroes of the revolution and of the people."

It is hard to write anything interesting about Deng, the man, because, as even his daughter admits, he is an aloof, rather colorless figure, who never had much of a private life. Deng was a super-apparatchik, particularly in the first half of his career, before he ascended the people's throne. During the war against Japan, he spent much of his time "rectifying" unorthodoxy in the Party ranks. He was also the political commissar of a division of the Eighth Corps of the Red Army. Maomao once asked Deng, " 'You were then alone at the front. It was not easy to lead, was it?' Father replied with a smile, 'I didn't do many things, but only one thing, that is, to endure hardships.' " This about sums up the personal stuff.

Mao, the man, was much more interesting, and his doctor probably had a closer view of him than Maomao has had of her own father, for doctors have power over the most important thing of all: the tyrant's health. This puts them in a very peculiar position. They seem omnipotent—and, indeed, they are expected to be omnipotent, since blame for the slightest sign of ill health will fall on them. And therein lies the doctors' vulnerability. If anything untoward should happen to the patient, the doctor will go down with him. But so will most of those whose authority depends on the ruler's staying alive. This is no doubt why the tyrant's health becomes an obsession among his courtiers. In Dr. Li's words concerning Mao's frequent constipation "A normal bowel movement became cause for celebration among his staff."

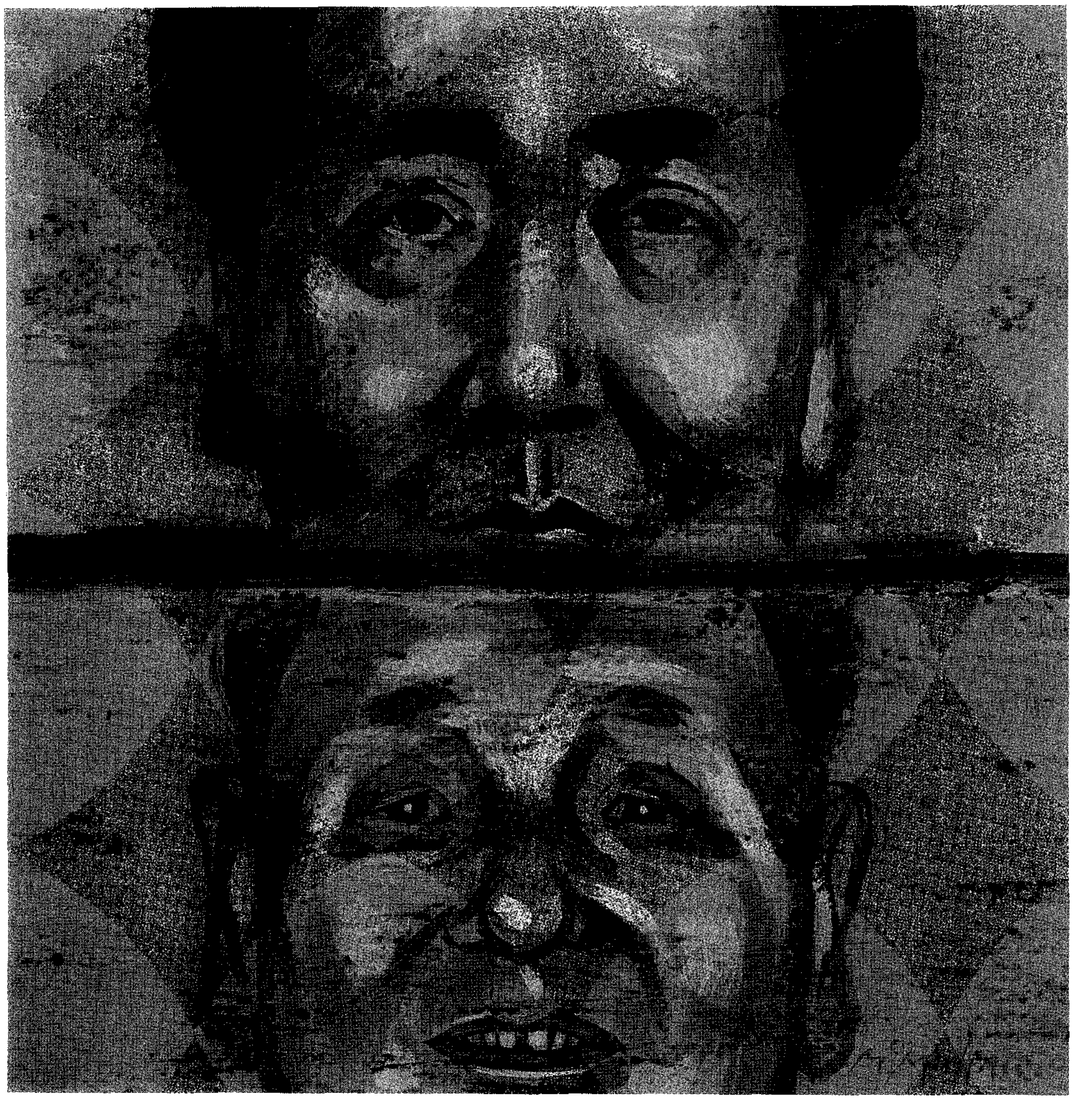
BEING a tyrant is an unhealthy occupation. As Li reveals, the mos common cause of Mao's ill health wa paranoia. This seems to be a general rule among those who have too much authority and no real friends: Lin Biao, Mao's top general, and one of the most powerful men in China until he was brough down (quite literally, in a dubious plane crash), suffered so badly from phobias—of water, wind, cold, even light—that h hardly emerged from his room. The very sound of running water gave him instan diarrhea. Jiang Qing, as well as Mao himself, suffered from what was called neurasthenia, the symptoms of which in cluded insomnia, headaches, dizziness, anxiety attacks, and, in men, impotence. Dr. Li "came to regard neurasthenia as a peculiarly communist disease, the result of being trapped in a system with no escape." Mao's potency, despite the ministrations of young dancers and railway hostesses, went up and down, so to speak, with his political fortunes. When he felt he was in control, he had no trouble. When he felt that he was not, he complained to his doctor.

Reading Dr. Li's descriptions of his patient makes one wonder whether messiahs, political or religious, are mad by definition. If the tyrant believes the propaganda of his own personality cult—believes that he is the greatest thinker of his time, the bravest general, the infallible leader, the artistic genius—he must be mad. And if he does not believe it the cynicism required to live with his own monumental lies is surely a form of lunacy, too. (This conundrum explains our fascination with such items as Hitler's table talk and Dr. Li's book: everyone would like to know the mind behind the icon.) From what Dr. Li tells us, Mao believed his own legend. As he puts it, "Mao had an almost mystical faith in the role of the leader. He never doubted that his leadership, and only his leadership, would save and transform China. . . . He shared the popular perception that he was the country's messiah." That is one reason he could not bear Khrushchev. If this Soviet revisionist could dismantle the cult of Stalin, a man Mao disliked but respected, his example might encourage future Chinese leaders to do the same to Mao. The Chairman was intent on humiliating Khrushchev, or, in his own typically earthy phrase, "sticking a needle up his ass." In Beijing, in 1958, Mao received Khrushchev while sitting beside his private pool in swimming trunks. In Moscow, when Khrushchev took Mao to the Bolshoi, Dr. Li reports, Mao did not hide his disdain: " 'I could never dance that way in my life,' he said to Khrushchev. 'How about you?' The Soviet leader agreed that he, too, could not possibly dance on his toes."

Deng Xiaoping's official line on Mao is faithfully regurgitated by his daughter: "Mao Zedong was a leader and a great man. . . . He both achieved successes and made mistakes." Deng, along with millions of others, was, of course, a victim of some of these mistakes. He was purged during the Cultural Revolution, and his eldest son was so badly bullied by Red Guards that he jumped from a window and was crippled for life. But Maomao's book still contributes to the cult of Mao. I shall pick just one item from the endless list of distortions. She describes how Mao joined Chiang Kai-shek in Chungking after the Japanese defeat in 1945, to negotiate an end to the civil war with the Nationalists. He did this, she writes, "with no regard to his personal safety, to demonstrate to the world that the CPC"—the Communist Party of China—"was sincere in seeking peace."

In fact, Mao wished to continue the revolutionary war, but was forced to go to Chungking by Stalin, who assured him that his safety would be guaranteed by the Soviet Union and the United States. Stalin also told his Chinese comrades that the talks were just a tactic to buy time for the Communists to mobilize their armies against the Nationalists.

In official propaganda, the Chinese Communists were always "sincere" in wanting peace, as well as power, just as they were "sincere" in their anti-Fascist war against the Japanese, whereas the Nationalists had, in Maomao's words, a "policy of national betrayal and humiliation." Maomao dwells with great indig-



Mao and Deng, China's de-facto emperors: being a tyrant is an unhealthy occupation.

nation on the help given to the Generalissimo by the American imperialists, without mentioning the far greater assistance rendered to the Communists by the Soviet Union. In fact, Chiang Kai-shek was as much of a patriot as Mao. Chiang wanted to unify China under the Kuomintang, and Mao wanted a Communist revolution. Both spent as much time and energy fighting one another as they did the Japanese. Of course, Maomao's description of the Communists as the only true patriots is part of the effort to legitimatize their revolution. One of her more amusing statements is that "history is history, and no one can rewrite it."

MAO read a lot of history—mostly Chinese but also Western. Like many megalomaniacs, he had a thing about Napoleon. His favorite characters included Napoleon and Qin Shihuangdi, the tyrannical emperor who, between 221 and 206 B.C., unified China, built the Great Wall, and ordered the burning of books to stamp out subversive thought. You would have to be eccentric, to say the least, to identify with the Qin emperor. And Dr. Li's portrait of Mao confirms that he had psychopathic traits. Mao's concern for human life was minimal. Dr. Li describes him chatting on gaily during a circus performance right after a child acrobat had been seriously injured. And Mao told the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru that the prospect of nuclear war did not worry him, because "China has many people," and "If someone else can drop an atomic bomb, I can too. The deaths of ten or twenty million people is [sic] nothing to be afraid of." This was very much in the Qin Shihuangdi mode.

Then, there was Mao's conspiracy mania. If his anxiety was not insane in itself, its intensity might have driven anyone over the brink. In 1958, Mao was staying at a beautiful guesthouse in Sichuan. An indoor pool had been built specially for his visit, but he was so afraid that plotters had poisoned the water that he refused to swim, even after his staff tested the water. Paranoia put Mao and his courtiers in a terrible double bind: Mao had to be told everything that went on—as Dr. Li explains, "failure to disclose everything could be taken as evidence of a plot"—yet criticism of Mao's policies, or anything that could be construed as such, met with ruthless punishment. A simple report of the truth could have fatal consequences for the messenger.

So the catastrophic results of Mao's Great Leap Forward—the decision, in 1958, to force the pace of the Chinese economy through sheer force of will, by making people melt down steel pots and pans in their back yards and by collectivizing agriculture—were carefully hidden from him. Dr. Li describes how this was done, in one of the most haunting passages in the book. One night, Mao and his staff were riding on a train through rural China. Fires from back-yard furnaces could be seen for miles around. Lin Ke, one of Mao's political secretaries, explained the situation to Dr. Li:

> What we were seeing from our windows, Lin Ke said, was staged, a huge multi-act nationwide Chinese opera performed especially for Mao. The party secretaries had ordered furnaces constructed everywhere along the rail route, stretching out for ten *li* on either side, and the women were dressed so colorfully, in reds and greens, because they had been ordered to dress that way. In Hubei, party secretary Wang Renzhong had ordered the peasants to remove rice plants from faraway fields and transplant them along Mao's route, to give the impression of a wildly abundant crop. The rice was planted so closely together that electric fans had to be set up around the fields to circulate air in order to prevent the plants from rotting.

Only one man was brave enough to tell Mao the truth about the Great Leap Forward, politely, in a private letter in 1959: the Vice-Premier and Defense Minister, Peng Dehuai. He was immediately denounced as a "right opportunist" and removed from his military posts. During the Cultural Revolution, seven years later, Peng was arrested and died in prison. Mao insisted on knowing everything, yet could not tolerate knowing the truth. This is the madness of every Great Dictator, from Nero to Hitler. Like the Qin emperor and some of the other madmen of history he professed to admire, Mao was—or, at any rate, had become—a monster.

AND yet to lay the blame for everything that went wrong in China between 1949 and 1976 on Mao's excessive personality, or even his madness, is to indulge in the same cult that he helped to unleash. The point is that the madness was an effect of the political system itself. As was true of Hitler and Stalin, Mao Zedong was a shrewd, ruthless, ill-educated, provincial man elevated to the status of God. Such elevation would warp any man, however well intentioned.

Still, it is also true that Mao aspired to greatness from an early age. This cannot be said of Deng Xiaoping, the super-administrator. Deng never wanted to be God, nor can he be described as such today. And yet his rule has been as personal as Mao's. Without any formal rank, Deng remains the "paramount leader" of China, even on his deathbed. In his daughter's account, China's destiny was Deng's. "His extraordinary foresight and sagacity," she writes, "enabled him to create a completely new situation for China decades later when the destiny of the entire nation was in his hands." Hers may be the first campaign biography of a dying saint. Although Deng was never deified, his daughter's language sounds oddly religious: "His smile transcends the range of time and space and is eternal."

The reason that some people insist on placing Mao or Stalin in a separate category from Hitler is that Communism, unlike Nazism, was based on a benevolent kind of idealism. It is probably true that Mao attracted a larger number of benign idealists than Hitler did. Mass murder was not part of the Communist ideology, even though it did occur as a result. Dr. Li himself came back to China full of good intentions. His ancestors "had placed great emphasis on the moral path." Members of his family "had taught service and sacrifice for the good of mankind." But he resented his father, who was an official in the Nationalist government, because he had strayed from the moral path: he was a womanizer and he "craved power." Dr. Li believed in Mao because he believed in the idea of sacrifice for the good of mankind.

Millions shared Dr. Li's belief, of course. But who can possibly define what the good of mankind is? Messiahs always claim that they can, but they do enough harm even when they are confined to their own little sects: think of Jonestown or Waco. Mao's Jonestown was one of the largest nations on earth. If the consequences had not been so dire, Dr. Li's descriptions of the extreme forms of Mao worship would be hilarious.

During the Cultural Revolution, fo example, Mao, in a fit of whimsy, decided to give some mangoes to the workers of China. This was to show his displeasure with feuding students and his trust in the proletariat. Mao's chief body-guard, who was put in charge of the mangoes, divided them up and gave one to each of a number of leading factories. One factory, in Beijing, held a ceremony in honor of its mango. The fruit was sealed in wax and placed on an altar, so that the workers could file past and worship it. But the mango began to rot, so the revolutionary committee decided to boil it, and then another ceremony took place. Each worker was allowed a sip of the water in which the sacred mango had been boiled. After that, a wax replica of the mango was placed on the altar for further veneration. When Dr. Li told this story to Mao, the Chairman thought it an excellent joke. Meanwhile, people were being killed for such counter-revolutionary crimes as accidentally sitting on Mao's Little Red Book, or inadvertently punning on his name, or, worst of all, expressing the slightest doubt that the Chairman was leading China straight to Utopia.

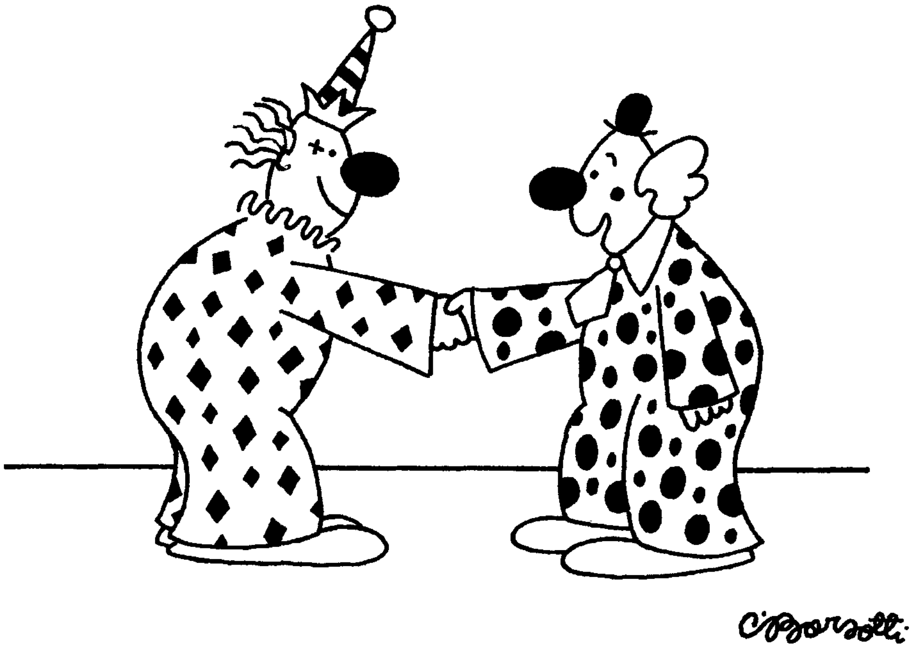
THE horror of an absolutist court is that it poisons everyone who comes near it. Take Zhou Enlai: he was not a wholly admirable character, but he was certainly an intelligent man, yet there he was, waving his Red Book at hysterical crowds in the nineteen-sixties, along with Jiang Qing. He knew that the Cultural Revolution was causing chaos, and that Jiang Qing's vindictive fantasies were destroying the lives of millions. But he also knew that his own survival depended on his continuing to wave that absurd little book and admire the naked emperor's new clothes. Dr. Li describes Zhou as "Mao's slave."

The difference between Nero's Rome or Ivan the Terrible's Russia and Hitler's Germany or Mao's China is one of scale. A modern despotism turns everybody, no matter how far from the center of power, into a toady or a cynic. People whose ethnic, religious, or class backgrounds do not allow them even these options tend to disappear altogether. Most Chinese were involved, in one way or another, in the cruel campaigns that the Chairman unleashed. Today's victims were often tomorrow's bullies.

During the Cultural Revolution, Mao asked Dr. Li to screen Party reports for him about political events taking place all over China. "Reading the reports kept me informed about the movement without having to be involved," Dr. Li writes. During a time of constantly shifting political currents, purges and counterpurges, and factional struggles within the court itself, this was priceless information. By piecing together various bits of news, and by accurately reading Mao's moods, Dr. Li anticipated Mao's rift with Lin Biao, who was in charge of the armed forces, before most other people did. Mao began to complain about there being too many "uniforms" around him, and Dr. Li "interpreted Mao's antagonism to the soldiers as a growing struggle with Lin Biao as well." Less astute courtiers backed Lin Biao for too long and got trampled on as a result.

The doctor's strongest card was the tyrant's reliance on his medical skills, and Mao was not as bad as Jiang Qing, who was prone to see a doctor's attempt to exercise his skills in ways she didn't understand as a plot to murder her. But, like all self-elected messiahs with grandiose notions of what is good for mankind, Mao had at best a tenuous grasp of and trust in modern science. Indeed, just a few twentieth-century examples show that political millenarianism and science are uneasy bedfellows. In the Third Reich, science was perverted by racial ideology and superstitious mumbo-jumbo: Hitler called the intellect "the atrophy of natural instinct"; Himmler was opposed to conventional medicine and fancied himself an expert in herbal remedies. Mao, for his part, had a Chinese peasant's attitude toward matters of personal hygiene. He never brushed his teeth, for example, but only washed his mouth with tea—a procedure that led to green teeth and infected gums. Unlike Himmler, however, Mao was not an herbalist. In public, he promoted traditional Chinese medicine, but he insisted on Western treatment for himself—that is, when he wanted to be treated at all. Basically, Mao distrusted doctors, since they were bourgeois intellectuals. "Medical students don't need to read so many books," he said. During the Cultural Revolution, he wanted to staff urban hospitals with newly graduated students and send experienced doctors to the villages. When he began to suffer from a fatal motor-neuron disease, he refused to listen to his doctors. He would yank out his feeding tube and, at the insistence of his mistress, he began receiving glucose infusions, which could have made his condition much worse.

All this posed terrible problems for Dr. Li and the doctors who worked under him. For security reasons, the specialists were not allowed to consult one another, and any resistance to the advice of Mao's nonmedical cronies could be exploited by other courtiers to brand the doctors as counter-revolutionaries. (Dr. Li himself was accused a couple of times by Jiang Qing of trying to poison the Chairman.) This meant that the poor doctors had to use all their cunning to keep their patient going while they were being sabotaged from all sides, not least by the patient himself. Nor did Mao's



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death put an end to their problems. They could still be accused of killing him. And even when they dodged these accusations the danger had not passed. Dr. Li was in charge of preserving the Chairman's body. At first, things went horribly wrong. After twenty-two litres of formaldehyde had been injected into Mao's corpse, it began to expand like a balloon, with the preservative fluid oozing from the pores. A team of frantic doctors worked through the night to massage the body back to more acceptable proportions.

Somehow, Dr. Li managed to survive this ordeal, along with all the others he had faced during his career. But there was still more to come. As part of a new campaign, he was sent to the countryside in 1977, to do hard labor as a peasant. He was eventually released, but he could never feel safe in China. In 1988, through a stroke of good fortune, Dr. Li and his wife, Lillian, were able to join their two sons in the United States. Lillian died less than a year later. Dr. Li, who lives in Chicago, looks back over a damaged life: "My dream of becoming a neurosurgeon never came to pass, and my hopes for a new China were dashed. My family life was destroyed, and now Lillian is dead." He feels that he paid for his book with his life. Deng Xiaoping tempered the lunacy of Maoism. His China is a better place to live than Mao's empire. People can get on with their lives without the constant fear of persecution, as long as they stay out of politics and remain the obedient subjects of a despotic system. China is still China, an authoritarian empire. And Deng Maomao's book is part of an ancient literary tradition, designed to make sure China will remain that way forever. ♦

VIRTUAL READING

Cyberpunk approaches the mainstream in "Vurt."

BY HAL ESPEN

Jeff Noon

VIRTUAL reality, true to its name, continues to recede into the brave new digital future. Except for a few tacky theme-park versions, the technology remains a vaporware phenomenon that has yet to escape from the labs and into the real world. For more than a decade, however—certainly since the publication of William Gibson's "Neuromancer," in 1984—V.R.'s imaginary analogues have proliferated in the subgenre that Gardner Dozois, the editor of *Asimov's Science Fiction*, christened "cyberpunk." More recently, virtual-reality story lines have become hot properties in Hollywood: Michael Douglas watches a virtual Demi Moore delete his career in "Disclosure"; Keanu Reeves (in the forthcoming "Johnny Mnemonic") and Denzel Washington (in "Virtuosity") will soon jack into the cyberspace frontier on film; and Robin Williams has bought the rights to Alexander Besher's virtual-reality novel "Rim," which *Wired* magazine is now serializing on the Internet. (HarperCollins West published a hard-copy version in November.)

The mainstreaming of cyberpunk continues with Jeff Noon's first novel, "Vurt" (Crown; $22). Noon, a thirty-seven-year-old former rock musician, won Britain's Arthur C. Clarke Award for "Vurt" last year; his American publisher, calling the book "really commercial and almost literature," has ordered a big first printing and is trying to reach beyond the sci-fi ghetto. One of the presumably commercial things about "Vurt" is the absence of daunting electronic paraphernalia and programming jargon: its artificial realities are not computer generated but induced by a variety of designer drugs. Noon has come up with the baroque notion of having these drugs packaged in the form of feathers: tickle the back of your friends' throats and they're gone, tickle your own throat and you can join them in a shared and utterly convincing dream world—the Vurt. While this novel observes most of the conventions of cyberpunk fiction, its imagery is insistently organic, and owes more to the underground pharmacology of the rave scene than to the world of hardwired chips and user interfaces.

"Vurt" is set in Manchester, in the not-too-distant future. (Madonna is dead, but Interactive Madonna is one of the stars at Woodstock Seven.) The narrator and hero is Scribble, who runs with a posse of feather-head proles who call themselves the Stash Riders. They live on public assistance—"the dripfeed"—and spend their time trying to score bootleg feathers. Blue feathers are safe and legal, pink feathers offer "Pornovurts," but black bootlegs are dangerous "knowledge feathers." (Much of the incidental pleasure in this kind of writing comes from the way catchphrases and throwaway references to brand names use the mundane to suggest the fantastic. Characters in "Vurt" smoke Napalm cigarettes, eat J.F.K. flakes for breakfast, and wear Showbiz cologne. A girl has hair "as blonde as the day is doomed," and a couple of "crusties" wash their greasy dreadlocks with Nanosham, a shampoo made of microscopic machines that turn "dirt into data, processing hair clean.") Naturally, the Stash Riders have a quest: to rescue Scribble's sister Desdemona from the Vurt, where she was trapped when a trip on English Voodoo, a booteg, took a nasty turn.

By and large, Noon is a woefully clumsy writer, and he brings a minimal evel of competence to bear on the car chases, street fights, and noir confrontations that take up much of the real-world plot. After the brisk and relatively engrossing opening chapters, Noon meanders back and forth between Scribble's Vurtual excursions and his desultory earch for Desdemona; the Stash Riders re hassled by the police (both "fleshcops" nd robots); and there are several long, pointless episodes involving a subculture of mongrel dog-people.

The book's most serious flaw is the flimsiness of the relationship between Scribble and Desdemona. Noon has tried to be daring by making the two siblings lovers, but he has no idea how to handle their incestuous passion, and his flashbacks to their lovemaking are pure Pornovurt. ("She was my sister, fifteen years old, but I loved her a lot. Too much. More than is good. More than is legal. She was stretched out and hot, and my right hand was stroking her leg way up, and she was smiling. . . .") In the end, when Scribble finally gets his chance to free Desdemona, there are hints that an abusive and (possibly virtual) father drove the siblings into each other's arms, but that doesn't explain why the author treats her like an inflatable love doll.

But Noon does make at least one valuable contribution to the metaphysics of virtual reality. In "Vurt," fantasy has a cost. The relationship between the world and the Vurt is governed by a set of exchange mechanisms, and Game Cat, a Vurt sorcerer whose periodic pronouncements about the laws of Vurt function as a Greek chorus, defines the risks:

> Friends and colleagues, fellow travellers in the Vurt, sometimes we lose them; even lovers we sometimes lose. And get bad things in exchange; aliens, objects, snakes, and sometimes even death. Things we don't want. This is part of the deal, part of the game deal; all things, in all worlds, must be kept in balance. . . . Any given worth of reality can only be swapped for the equivalent worth of Vurtuality, plus or minus 0.267125 of the original worth.

When Scribble loses Desdemona, he is thrown back into reality with an amorphous blob of an alien—a poor substitute for his beloved sister. And then there are dreamsnakes: "Any time something small and worthless was lost to the Vurt, one of these snakes crept through in exchange." A growing number of poisonous Vurt vipers—part of the unintended cost of unfettered fantasy—lurk in the shadows of reality.

It's a suggestive notion, and an ingenious way to dramatize the fear of being overwhelmed by the mechanics of wish fulfillment. The plot of "Rim," Alexander Besher's novel, is based on a similar trope: a computer virus causes a glitch that leaves scores of children bottled up in cyberspace, and Tokyo is replaced by its virtual counterpart. Soon enough, we're going to have to learn how to inhabit the wilds of cyberspace, but we're already preparing for the psychic economy of our virtual destination. ♦

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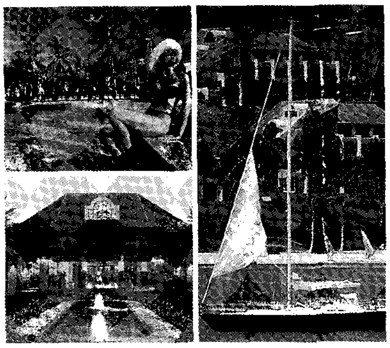

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RECOMMENDED READING

Nelson: A Personal History
by Christopher Hibbert
(Addison-Wesley; $30)

Horatio Nelson's thrashing of the French fleet at the Battle of the Nile made him a hero, and the adulation of his nation—of Lady Emma Hamilton, in particular—fed his already robust vanity. That vanity was, ultimately, fatal: he chose to wear his many decorations while leading the Victory at Trafalgar and a French marksman hit the glittering target, thus ending the career of Britain's greatest naval hero. Hibbert's triumph is that he elucidates the sources of both Nelson's vanity and his heroism.

1915: The Death of Innocence
by Lyn Macdonald (Holt; $35)

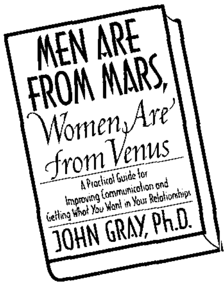
This insightful military history re-creates the experiences of British Empire troops in a year of stalemate in Flanders and defeat at Gallipoli by mining letters, diaries, and recollections of veterans. Macdonald vividly demonstrates the incalculable cost of political failure: on every front, the British were constrained by a shortage of ammunition caused primarily by the inability of civilian ministers to give direction to the aged war minister, Lord Kitchener. The book also displays the valor of the Empire's young men, who gaily volunteered their lives with an innocence that, as the title suggests, has disappeared forever.

In Pharaoh's Army
by Tobias Wolff (Knopf; $23)

In 1964, Wolff enlisted in the Army for a variety of reasons: to elude his father's sullied reputation, to follow in the footsteps of Mailer and Hemingway. This elegant memoir tells the story of his tour in Vietnam and his inevitable disillusionment—which is foreshadowed, with characteristic wry understatement, by his description of jumping out of a plane at Fort Benning: "The ground, abstractly picturesque from on high, got hard-looking and particular. There were trees, boulders, power lines. It seemed personal, even vengeful, the way these things rushed up at you."

Conversations with Survivors
by Jacqueline Osherow
(Georgia; $9.95)

In what is usually called "the poetry of witness," which strives to document terrible events as a way of preventing their recurrence, the best intentions are often thwarted by the pose of the poet as one who knows better. This poet, however, proves a welcome exception; in blank-verse epistles and conversations, Osherow explores political and historical truths beyond the horrors of circumstance. While her conscience moves her to acknowledge the gravity of the past, her talent keeps her from preening.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ON TELEVISION

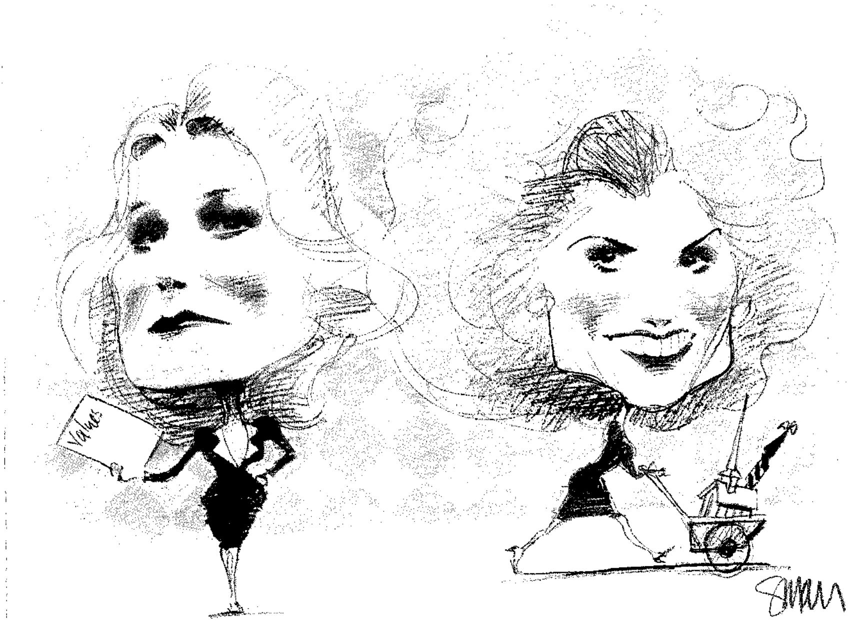
BEYOND THE VALUES OF THE SUPERVIXENS

Two Washington insiders reinvent themselves on the spiritual plane.

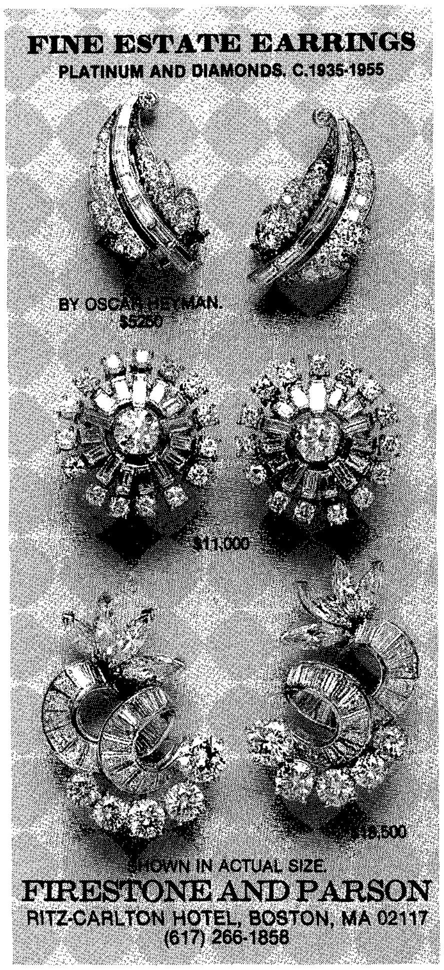
BY JAMES WOLCOTT

RHETORICAL roughnecks like Rush Limbaugh, Pat Buchanan, John McLaughlin, and Robert Novak have busted an opening in the TV airwaves for less bombastic conservatives. While those manly men pride themselves on the ability to deliver verbal head butts, there is a second wave of Republican conservatives who concern themselves with he healing process ahead—the spiritual ebuilding. They are Republican women—vomanly women, secure in the traditional ole of caregiver. Mary Matalin excepted, hey concern themselves less with dogights in the political arena than with the arger disquietude racking America's selfsteem. They might use the word "malaise" o describe the country's slumping moale if that word weren't permanently asociated with Jimmy Carter (a liberal, ence a leper). The most prominent of hese maternal soul-menders are Peggy Noonan and Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington. Both are inside players who have lofted themselves onto a higher spiritual plane.

Peggy Noonan, the former speechwriter for Presidents Reagan and Bush, is the author of such famous phrases as "a kinder, gentler nation," "a thousand points of light," and "Read my lips: no new taxes." She has always been an anomaly in Republican circles, and that is part of her mysterious allure—the thing that makes Charlie Rose lean forward to hear her purr. Most Republican women are stereotyped as Waspy Stepford wives poised in the doorways of picture-perfect homes, but Noonan is urban, Catholic, quizzical. She deals in metaphors and elliptical halftones rather than in ideological commandments. Her conservatism isn't a dose of strong medicine but a soothing broth. When inspired by a Pow-



If Peggy Noonan is a pilgrim on a quest, Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington is an oracle setting up shop.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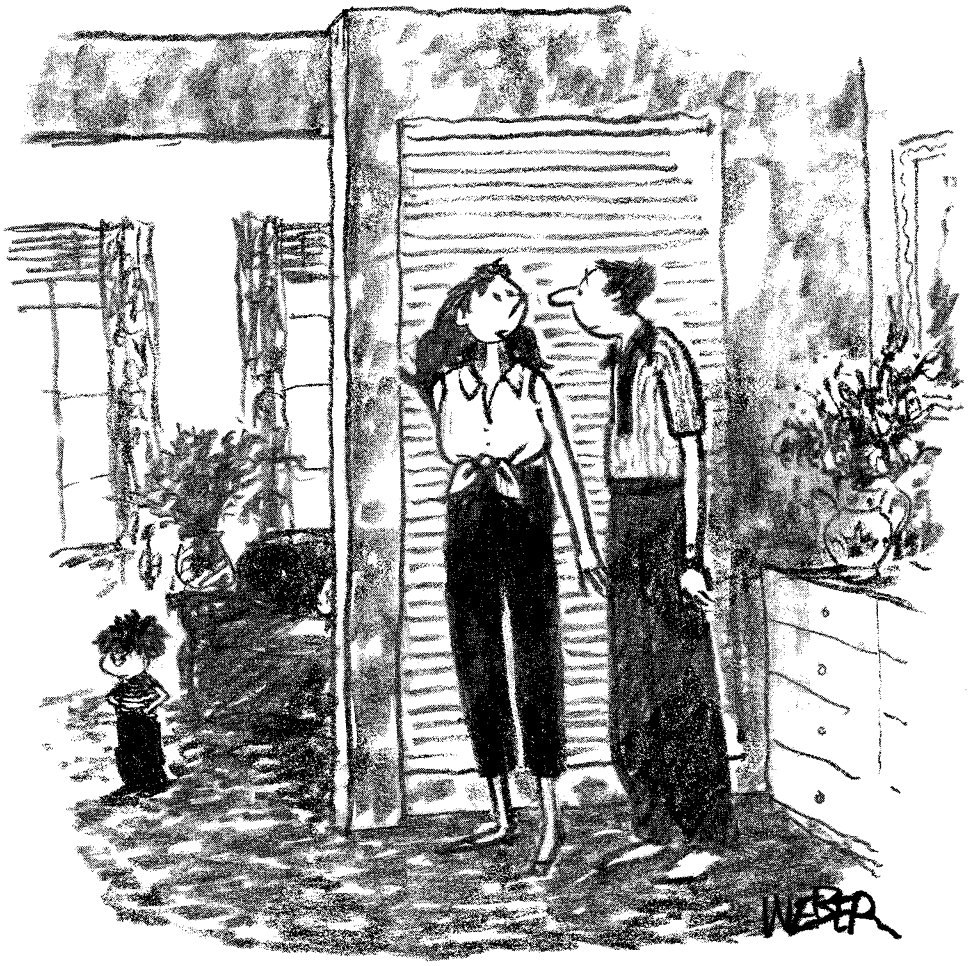
erful Political Figure, however, she can gush like a groupie. (Her latest flame: Newt Gingrich.) "What I Saw at the Revolution," the 1990 memoir of her White House years, reflected the ruddy glow of Reagan's apple-cheeked optimism. An excerpt landed her on the cover of the *Times Magazine;* the book became a best-seller; the reviewers were smitten. Her second book, "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" (1994), a potpourri of meditations on the political and cultural scene, mirrored the muddle and letdown of the Bush defeat. It, too, was a best-seller, but the honeymoon ended in tears. Many reviewers, including Andrew Sullivan and Jonathan Yardley, found Noonan's spacey monologue an irritating spectacle, a self-addressed valentine of inane anecdotes and precious whims. Noonan was berated so harshly that Michael M. Thomas felt the need to rise to her defense in the New York *Observer.* (Why do I picture a kangaroo with boxing gloves?) Despite such champions, the damage was done: Peggy Noonan was convicted in the press of being a narcissistic ditz.

As if to restore some iron to her reputation, Noonan is hosting "On Values," a three-part series on PBS beginning February 10th. Each part has a theme: "Faith," "Family," and "Freedom." As Noonan concedes in her introduction, "values" has become a buzzword. But, she says, although people may disagree about how to define values, there's no denying "a pervasive sense of loss . . . that cuts across generations and ideologies and party lines." America, the shining city on the hill, is in danger of becoming a red-light district of cheap, shabby diversions, a list of which Noonan supplies in the second show: "Madonna, Bruce Willis blowing things up, adult channels, rap songs, nice little public-service ads reminding you to wear that condom." To diagnose the American dolor and seek answers, she consults a series of talking heads from both ends of the political spectrum, and their words of wisdom soon have her nodding in agreement. In front of the TV, the viewer is nodding, too. Nodding out.

Noonan has always acted as if she carried moonbeams home in a jar, but she has never been daydreamier than she is as host of "On Values." She tips her head to one side, a clasp of worry pinching her eyebrows together, and asks troubled questions in a quiet bedside manner. On Michael Lerner, the editor of the liberal Jewish magazine *Tikkun*, she asks, "Have we, do you think, in America, in our time, in the time that you and I have been alive, have we banished religion from the public square?" As he responds, she listens with her entire head. It's clear she has modelled her empathetic listening on that of the master of empathetic listening, Bil Moyers. Indeed, "On Values" may be her trial run to become PBS's female conservative Bill Moyers (and thus a deflector shield against criticism from Newt and company that PBS is too liberal). They're certainly a match, these two. When Noonan interviews Moyers in the show "Faith," their wavelengths meet in a Vulcan mind-meld. I don't mean to mock their mutual concern. I mean, I do but I don't. Our culture has corroded, and no amount of leftist sneering at the "Father Knows Best" fifties can erase the memory many Americans have of a country that wasn't beset by crack, drive by shootings, and serial-killer chic. But as with most soft stabs at generalization, "On Values" is much better at taking readings of the post-Vietnam doldrums than at offering practical remedies The guests invoke God and communit in a vague gesture of good intentions as if fetching Grandma's shawl. The religious faith they attest to sounds like a fake hiding place from the night fears that Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Freud forced us to confront. Noonan's guest seem to be trying to revoke modernity— or, at least, to put it out of their minds Only the two black intellectuals sh interviews, Shelby Steele and Stanle Crouch, offer something more tha rumination.



"Do you want to tell him he's taking all the fun out of our marriage or shall I?"

IF Peggy Noonan is a pilgrim on quest, Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington is an oracle setting up shop. As recent item in the *Wall Street Journal* observed, her husband's narrow and costl defeat in the California senatorial race ha been a boon to her career. She has stage a comeback worthy of a Broadway sta While Candidate Huffington is missin from Earth, having his brain rewired bac on the mother ship, his wife has bee omnipresent, making the talk-show rounds and preparing her own TV pilot, "Beat the Press." His failure has somehow freed her to be even more completely herself. "Everything is a stepping-stone," Mrs. Huffington has said—a lesson she may have learned from her guru, John-Roger, the founder of the Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness, who counsels, among other things, "Use everything to your advantage." She does, always did. Even before John-Roger, she possessed a shameless bravura, once posing for *Town & Country* as the goddess Aphrodite.

Where Noonan is cashmere soft, Arianna is brassy hard. She wears beautifully tailored dresses, which offset her fiery orange helmet of power hair. Radiating charm, she uses her regal height to advantage, bowing her head as if bestowing favor, and transfixing her prey with her intense eye beams. She does not, however, have an endless supply of noblesse oblige. When she is contradicted on TV, her gracious smile hardens into granite, and her eyes become icepicks. The anger is laced with chagrin, with a cold drop of fake pity for those who spurn enlightenment.

It's feminists who turn her into a praying mantis. On CNN's "Crossfire," she bit off the head of *The Nation's* Katha Pollitt, telling her that she and her "Marxist" beliefs belonged in a museum. On a series of "Firing Line" panels on feminism moderated by William F. Buckley, Jr. (so laid back that he seemed to be having a near-life experience), her chief nemesis was the founder of the modern women's movement, Betty Friedan. Old, cranky, quick to take offense, Friedan became flustered at times, raising her voice and pounding the table, her white hair flying like Beethoven's in the throes of creation. All of which still didn't excuse the patronizing contempt with which she was treated by Huffington. ("The Feminine Mystique" is enough of an achievement to warrant anyone's respect.) "For your sake, you need to understand what's happening," Huffington said, and, later, "You are so out of touch it's totally pathetic." When Friedan fumed that her tormentor cared only about the rich (the word "rich" napped Buckley out of his nap long enough for him to cry foul), Huffington played the wounded party so effectively that Friedan, one-third Huffington's size, was cast as the bully. What these altercations reveal is that Huffington is adept at fighting with her back to the ropes. Her experience as the head of the Cambridge Union puts her in the pro ranks of counterpunchers. But these shows (and her recent appearance with Tom Snyder) also reveal that she's a poor spokesmodel for her own program. As a bringer of light, she's rather dim. Like her husband, but better camouflaged, she's on automatic pilot, repeating the same nostrums (government, bad; business, good; God, best), unable to improvise because her thoughts keep bumping up against her preconceived notions, her Zsa Zsa Gabor accent thickening with each repetition. She won't be a true TV star until she rids herself of her own starch.

POLITICS may be just a pretext. What Peggy Noonan and Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington are really interested in is the process of "reinventing" themselves. Reinventing oneself—it's a very postmodernist notion, perfect for the age of morphing and Madonna. It would be absurd to think of people like Hemingway and George Eliot and Garbo reinventing themselves. With them, we assume a core of sensibility—assume that their personal and artistic growth was a matter of going deeper within or further out, not of deciding to take up tap. Even Picasso didn't so much reinvent himself as piece together the maimed forms with which he worked. How are stable values viable in a world where the self strikes more poses than a Cindy Sherman portfolio? The values movement doesn't stand a chance against the hunger for variety and fame. No amount of nostalgia is going to make the American soul content to come to rest at the local house of faith or putter around the old neighborhood. Republicans, for all their retro attitudes, sense this as keenly as Democrats do, and maybe more so. A few weeks ago, I was scanning the dial, and there, on the America's Talking cable show "Straight Forward," subbing for Roger Ailes, was Georgette Mosbacher, the socialite wife of a former Republican cabinet secretary, and another staunch advocate of power femininity. My God, I thought, there's more of them! An endless line of Avon supervixens peddling old-fashioned values! Composed, aloof, perfectly assembled, Georgette Mosbacher looked like the First Lady of future shock. ♦

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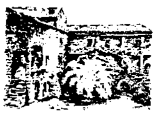

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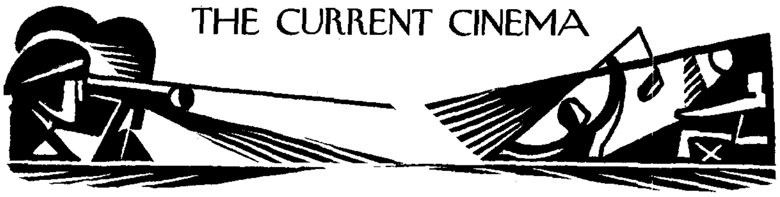


THE CURRENT CINEMA

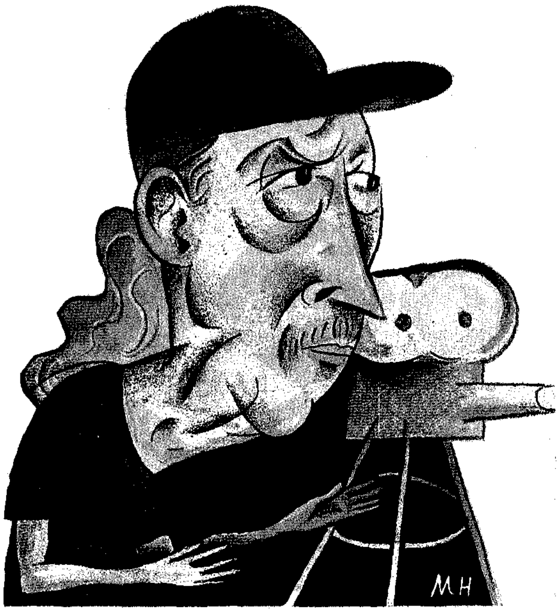
SCARE TACTICS

A literary horror story and a Scottish twist on Hitchcock.

BY ANTHONY LANE

"IN THE MOUTH OF MADNESS" represents the latest attempt by John Carpenter to regain the ground that he held with such style and with so little pretension in the seventies and early eighties. "Dark Star," "Assault on Precinct 13," "Halloween," "The Fog," "Escape from New York," "The Thing," "Christine"—what a great body of work it was. Uneven, of course, and studded with moments of cheesiness, but always wide awake, and so absurdly ominous that even your nerves started laughing. Carpenter was a benign version of the bogeyman in "Halloween," refusing to give up: he needled us with provocative fun, forcing us to admit that we enjoyed the bracing air of threat and the emergency heroism that it aroused—his characters were at their best when their worst fears crawled in through the window. Even now, after an unhealthy number of viewings, I find it impossible to skip or skim "Assault on Precinct 13." I have to see it through, check that everything turns out all right. Carpenter is one of the few directors whose evident pleasure in the process of moviemaking flows straight through to the experience of moviewatching; his two most pressing needs—to get some life into the picture and to scare the life out of the audience—are like strands of a single rope. The studios have tried to open him up, to wave him on to bigger and better things, without stopping to wonder if he might be genuinely more at home with the small and the satanic. "Memoirs of an Invisible Man" had good things in it, but, like "Starman" and "Big Trouble in Little China," it felt disengaged, unwindin itself from Carpenter's true passion and floating as free as the bandages o its hero.

And now we have "In the Mouth o Madness," which, like "Prince of Darkness" in 1987, finds Carpenter returnin to his old haunt, the horror flick. Th



John Carpenter has always liked his terror solid, and close at hand.

central figure is a writer named Sutte Cane (Jürgen Prochnow), who churn out fey, enchanting novelettes with titl like "The Thing in the Basement." The come with ghoul-kitsch covers and sell b the hundredweight; next to Cane, appar- ently, Stephen King is like someone ou of "La Bohème," blotting his work wit bread crusts in a ratty garret. But sale are one thing, promotion is another, an Cane has a splendid trick to keep h publishers happy: his books drive peop crazy. At the start of the film, we see blank-eyed psycho run riot with an ax this, it turns out, is Cane's *agent*—or wa before the cops blew him away. Tal about loyalty to your authors. Whoever he is, Sutter Cane is to die for.

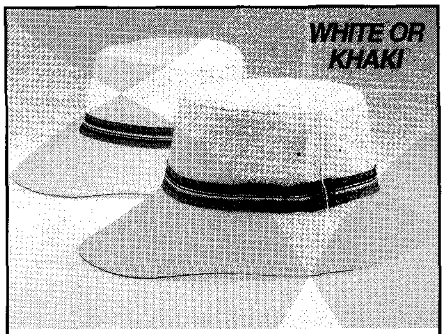
But that's the point: no one knows who he is or where he is or why he should choose to write like this. When nothing is heard from Cane, his publisher (Charlton Heston) begins to get antsy. Now, it takes a lot to upset Charlton Heston—people have strapped blades to their chariot wheels and failed—so this must be pretty serious. An investigator named Trent (Sam Neill) is appointed to find the missing man, and he teams up with Linda Styles (Julie Carmen). Until now, Linda has had the task of editing Cane's prose: an unlikely story, given that her head is still firmly attached to her shoulders, and I was unsurprised—gratified, in fact—to find the attachment growing looser as the movie went on. At one point, her head actually swivels around to face the wrong way, which is presumably what happens to people who try to cut Cane's adverbs. It's a gruesome sight, but not inappropriate; Linda may simply be struggling to get her brain around the plot. I know how she feels.

She and Trent drive off into the middle of nowhere and soon find themselves in Hobbs End—a town not found on any map but nevertheless *vaut le voyage*, as the Michelin guide would say, since it is the personal fiefdom of Sutter Cane. Taking their cue from (a) the eerie quiet of the place and (b) the pack of unleashed Dobermans running around, our heroes come to suspect that they have been sucked into the writer's universe, a suspicion confirmed by Cane himself with a Cartesian quip: "I think, therefore you are." Neat, I guess, but it made my heart sag. What transforms "In the Mouth of Madness" from a fright into a disappointment is its reliance on that old standly Real versus Imagined—the aesthetic equivalent of the Pro-Celebrity tournament. "In the Mouth of Madness" poses ll the obvious questions without encourging any particular desire to know the nswers. Does Sutter Cane exist? Does nyone else exist? Is the whole world one iant Cane story? If so, should we be facng backward to look at the screen?

Sam Neill looks faintly baffled by all his. He is such a likable actor, with his wn fusion of intensity and cheek, that he last year or so—the period of "The Piano" and "Jurassic Park"—must have roved hard for him to take. First, a wife who won't talk; then scary monsters that you can't even see, because the computer puts them in afterward; and now scary monsters that you can see but which turn out on closer inspection to be the figments of a novelist's fancy. It's not hard to imagine the spunky heroines of earlier Carpenter films snorting with derision at this: "Enemies in the head? *We* should be so lucky." The whole joy of "The Fog" was that something that sounded as wraithlike as a bad dream or an old wives' tale turned out to be armed and dangerous. Carpenter has always liked his terror solid, and close at hand—think of Spielberg without the redemption or the need to console.

All of which leaves "In the Mouth of Madness" stranded—a minor, oddly whimsical work, its narrative energy scattered and lost in blind alleys. You are left with those few, perfect Carpenter instants when the mood turns palpable, and fear begins to form like ice: the darkened road, say, on which an elderly, shock-haired bicyclist whirrs slowly past, the reflectors on his pedals glowing in the night; or the lunatic asylum in which Trent ends up, his rational capacity exploded by Sutter Cane. "Things are turning to shit out there, aren't they?" Trent says to the doctor. This half-angry hint of political parable wafts through the entire movie, as it did through Carpenter's "They Live": any country that can go ape over a cheap potboiler—or a cheap politician, for that matter—has serious problems. "What about people who don't read?" Trent is asked. He smiles and replies, "There's a movie."

"SHALLOW GRAVE," directed by Danny Boyle, is a smart new shocker from Scotland—too smart, at times, for its own good. John Hodge's close-fitting screenplay presents us with four main characters. Alex (Ewan McGregor), a journalist, shares an apartment with Juliet (Kerry Fox), a doctor, and David (Christopher Eccleston), a bespectacled accountant. The three of them get into trouble. The fourth character *is* the trouble. Played by the sublimely unpleasant Keith Allen, who makes you feel that the human face is destined to evolve into a sneer, he turns up when the roommates advertise for a new lodger. Allen recently took, or embodied, the role of the wife-battering Jonas in a new BBC production of "Martin Chuzzlewit," and he still seems to be wrapped in a mist of Dick-



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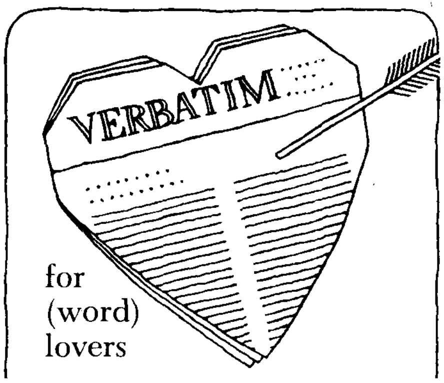

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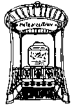

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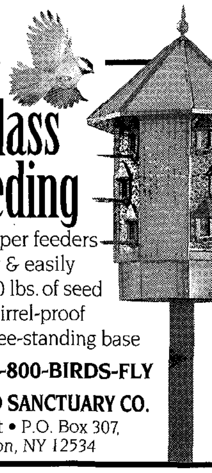

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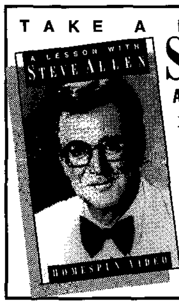

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ensian malice. In "Shallow Grave" he is mixed up in drugs, and has both the gall to die of an overdose in the spare bedroom and the decency to leave a suitcase bulging with money under the bed.

Alex and the others burst in and find him. They play it cool, but the camera is even cooler: like a Renaissance artist preparing an anatomical sketch, it travels carefully around the corpse, which is splayed in artful nakedness. The effect is heightened by the Titian blue of the walls, which glows ever more strongly as the days pass and the rigorous flesh turns purple-gray. This visual suavity is the great strength of "Shallow Grave": after the first whippy travelling shot through Edinburgh streets, the formality of Boyle's framing lowers the temperature of the melodrama, and the color scheme—swaths of mint green and beef red, each room of the apartment like a different season—suggests that shades of feeling, too, are heading for a clash. John Carpenter would probably watch "Shallow Grave" with nostalgia, even with envy, because, like "Halloween," it demonstrates the virtues of economy, reminding us how style can bloom inside a tight budget—there's no room for loose ends. Danny Boyle can't afford to paint the town red, so he settles for a door; if most of your movie is set inside an apartment, you may as well practice your interior decoration. Still, it's not healthy to stay in *all* the time. Everybody should get out now and again, so why not make a night of it—you know, seal a dead man in plastic, take him out to the countryside, chop off a few cold cuts, and bury the rest?

"Shallow Grave" is a new twist on that old Hitchcock teaser: How do you get rid of a body without losing your mind? Like "Rope" and "The Trouble with Harry," it seems more of an exercise in logic than a straight chiller; it fights to keep a straight face while the three leads bicker and snap over the loot. As the body count climbs, Hodge's script plunges onward without remorse—bright with intelligence but also frosted over with something inhuman. The giveaway comes in the bit parts. Look at the pair of ludicrous police detectives who perch on the sofa as they deliver their dumb lines—these aren't people, they're props. Even the central characters have to work hard to convince us that they *are* characters. Kerry Fox, sad to say, has the weakest part of all, and the frowning emotional conviction that pulled her so truthfully through "An Angel a My Table" has nothing to hook ont here. If anyone carries the movie, it' Christopher Eccleston, who digs aroun in his role and comes up with a shinin conceit: the young man who decides t steal money and slice up human flesh i order to convince himself that he is something more than a dull-hearted accountant, and then hoards the cash with precisely the kind of pedantic pains that made him such a good accountant in the first place. Crouched in a locked loft, watching tenderly over his treasure like Gollum guarding the ring of Middle Earth, he fulfills rather than betrays himself in crime.

The film needs more of this density, another layer of moral (as opposed to practical) unease, although, to be fair, you don't feel that need until you're well outside the theatre. While it's running, "Shallow Grave" is a thoroughly modern movie quick, tortuous, greased with fine style and enjoyably excessive. In Britain, it ha already been greeted as the savior of th national film industry—a poisoned chalice if ever there was one, and a burde that Danny Boyle could do without. If h has had the intuition to make a film o the moment, we should pause to conside what the moment looks like. There was point in "Shallow Grave" at which I saw branching out ahead, the many possible paths available to the plot. It could take any of them, which is a tribute to the inventiveness of Hodge and Boyle, but it didn't *matter* which it took. I really didn't care—they were all the same to me. This is something new in movies: thrille indifference, without even the corniest sympathies to sway us in either directio The only certainty is that of violence; b fair means or foul, preferably foul, we a led into battle. Audiences have change utterly since the days of Hitchcock; they n longer tremble at the prospect of bloodshe but laugh out loud as the trickle swells t a flood. The idea that it could be withheld for the purposes of suspense wouldn occur to them—or, if it did, would stri them as pure bad faith on the director part. "Shallow Grave" pulls back slight for the handsaw scenes, but not to worr Boyle is reserving his forces for the gran finale. As the story reached the last tw of the knife, I looked around me and sa people having a great time—smiling, u shockable, Tarantino-trained. Everythi is comedy now, or ripe for comic attac What will it take to make us look away?

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THE THEATRE

TABLE TALK

Old friends compare notes in "After-Play."

BY NANCY FRANKLIN

IT comes as no surprise that Anne Meara, whose new comedy, "After-Play," is now at the Manhattan Theatre Club, is a pro at creating realistic funny situations. For more than thirty years, Meara has been half of the comedy team Stiller & Meara: baby boomers and their begetters will remember her and her husband, Jerry Stiller, from their dozens of appearances on "The Ed Sullivan Show" and from their radio commercials for Blue Nun (and slackers may know them as the parents of Ben Stiller, who had his own TV show a couple of years ago and last year directed and starred in "Reality Bites"). They were an odd couple—she a tall, red-headed Irish Catholic, he a short, curly-haired New York Jew—but their humor, while it acknowledged their sharp differences, was rounded off, universal, generically illustrative of relations between the sexes, or, as we say in the nineties, the whole man-woman thing.

"Who ever thought we'd end up being the *alter kockers*?" says Phil as he and his wife, Renee, and another post-middle-aged couple settle down to an after-theatre supper in a sleek new restaurant in Manhattan. Phil and Renee (Larry Keith and Barbara Barrie), two veteran comedy writers, are in from the Coast, visiting their old friends Marty and Terry (Merwin Goldsmith and Rue McClanahan), two veteran actors, whom they haven't seen in several years. Like longtime friends everywhere, they break the ice by comparing notes on the outrageousness of getting older, the constant rude surprise of it all, and their dialogue displays Meara's ear for the way men and women talk and her sense of the dynamics—the familiarity and the formality, the intimacies and the gaps—that exist between couples who have known each other forever.

The way the couples respond to the play they've just seen tells us a lot about how they respond to the world. Terry and Marty were moved; Phil and Renee felt manipulated. Marty was sucked in by the play's button-pushing reminders of his childhood (the usual suspects: decoder rings, knickers, a mother who saved pennies in a milk bottle and collected tinfoil to win the war); Phil and Renee grudgingly take their hats off to the play's use of "potent devices" and "clever technique." (Meara herself has used a clever technique to show the choices writers and performers have to make: get sentimental, or get real.) In "After-Play," as in life, the conversation jumps into a more urgent gear whenever someone leaves the table and alters the equilibrium—that's when the secrets come out. When the men go to the john, the women waste no time getting to the subject of sex: there's a lot of ground to cover in four minutes. The main actors come to their roles with decades of stage, film, and TV experience, and, under the direction of David Saint, they make a comfortable and believable foursome, though none of them give off much of a show-biz vibe. (John C. Vennema and Rochelle Oliver, as a couple whose son has recently died, appear in one scene, and they are heart-wrenching.)

Because "After-Play," which is Meara's first full-length work for the stage, is about life in general, it has—despite its many funny lines and its author's gift for capturing the rhythms of conversation—a somewhat generic feel to it. That quality may work to its advantage, though: like A. R. Gurney's "Love Letters," it could become a perennial, for it goes a long way toward satisfying a theatregoer's occasional desire for the comforting non-shock of recognition. You don't shake your head and think, How true; you nod and think, with a smile, True enough. ♦

SHOUTS & MURMURS

DAVE'S JOURNAL

BY BRUCE McCALL

– MONDAY –

–M.C. Oscars, L.A., 6-10 P.M. P.C.T.

–10:30 P.M., hotel, music suits: "Frank Duets w. Dave" or "Dave Duets w. Frank"? Settle!

– TUESDAY –

–Put together "Top 10 Reasons I Accepted Commissioner of Baseball Job"—get word "fungo" into min. of 5.

–Ovitz meeting, 10 A.M. Check out this President of the International Court of Justice at The Hague deal. (If black robe a must, have to tell Mike nix. Does Hague get Knicks games? Etc.)

–12 noon, L.A.X.-J.F.K.

–Do show. May I ask a simple question? Anybody around here check if Kim Il Jong speaks English? Writer memo: No sumo jokes! State Dept. sez (a) sensitive kid & (b) hair-trigger type & (c) has nukes.

–Meet w. writers 10 P.M. to review script for Legion of Honor award. (What's French for "frog"? Sally should research.) P.S.: drop "I was in the Resistance but I didn't see you guys" bit.

– WEDNESDAY –

–Publishers Clearing House prize-giving, 12 noon. (McMahon P.O.'d, Leno sez. Whose side Carson on? Who'll phone?)

–4 P.M., CBS. Do promos re: being my own guest on show.

–Tape Simpson trial Easter special, Court TV.

–Do show. Announce China-Tibet peace accord. Richard Gere jokes? Sally to follow up.

– THURSDAY –

–Restart B. Shields career. (Book on Snyder? New show after Snyder?)

–2:30 P.M. Meet w. Larry T. Final NO: can't fill in for guest host on my own damn show! Besides, conflict w. papal thing. (Get slippers!)

– FRIDAY –

–Fax to Yeltsin's P.R. man: Dacha has to have air hockey or D.L. no-show at the Duma. Play hardball on this one!

–Do show.

– SATURDAY –

–J.F.K.-Moscow flight (tentative).

–Moscow. Red-eye to Stockholm late P.M. Meet w. writers en route re: funny stuff about receiving Nobel ("Top 10 Things Not to Do with Dynamite" list? Get Marilyn to polish.)

– SUNDAY –

–Stockholm-London. Opening-of-Parliament script the pits as written. New writers? "Stupid Royal Heir Tricks" maybe be funnier here than there?

– MONDAY –

–*London-N.Y.C. Meeting* 4 P.M.: throw Economic Summit kickoff talk to writers. (Distribute J. M. Keyne book?) "Wall Street Week" guest sho a great warmup. My "tips" for Rukeyser new hairdresser, etc. Ideas, guys, ideas Need by Fri. A.M. latest.

–Restart Dick Clark's career. (Shields-Clark infomercial selling Snydermani video?)

–Do show. Good chance to final do "S. Rushdie Remote" gig usin Arafat. (Will Y. take pie in face Check!)

– TUESDAY –

–State of the Union Address a Radio City? Remind those guy January is out (Conference on th Law of the Sea conflict) & it's now or never. Herb's idea: wear Millard Fillmore's old suit. Great—who'll check it out?

–Restart my career. (2:30 A.M. slot, after Shields after Clark after Snyder, wide open. Think about it.)

– WEDNESDAY –

–Do show. (Can we pants Boutros Boutros? Clear beforehand!)

–To decide: sign with ABC, NBC, TBS, too? One show = 90% ra ings share for time slot, suits sa Logistics problem: 4 theatres. Br

–Restart Hillary's career.

–Or the Dave Channel? Worr time crunch if World Bank gig a g

– THURSDAY –

–"Dave doesn't really want to be Sec. Treas. cuz too busy to sit around signi dollar bills all day." Sound too snotty? A Larry T. to talk to Wash. and get the guys off my back!

–Miss America: Thanks, flattered, et but not qualified. Needs strong letter.

–Do show. ♦

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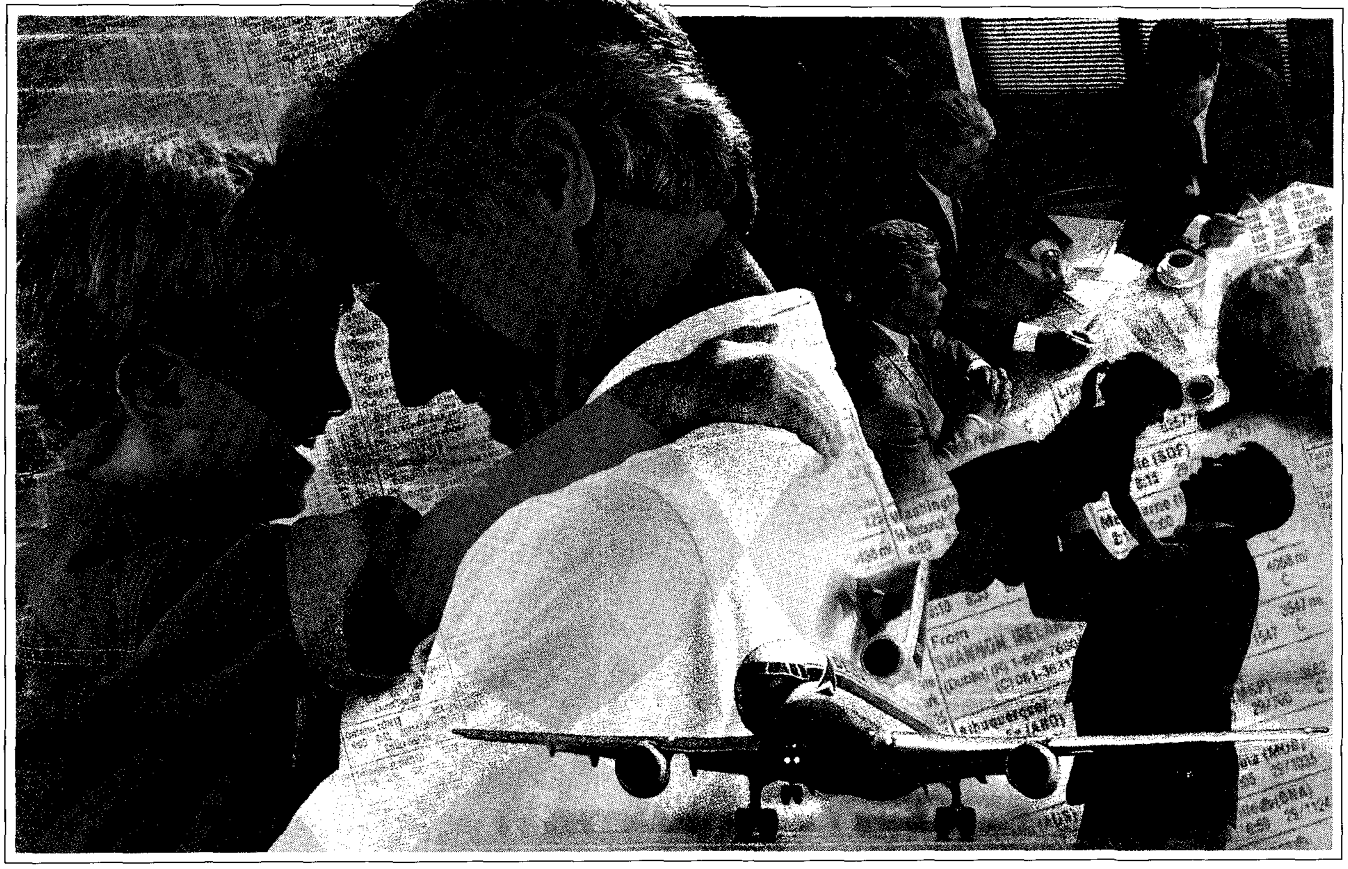

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